

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	06/12/2012
Inspector	Judith Longden
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	02/05/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home provides care and accommodation for up to six young people who are diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum and/or having learning disabilities and who are unable to live with their families due to the complexity of their diagnosis.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Good progress	The children's home has demonstrated continued improvement in quality of care and outcomes for children and young people and where appropriate has addressed all requirements and the large majority of recommendations that were raised at the previous inspection.
Satisfactory progress	The children's home has maintained quality of care and outcomes for children and young people and where appropriate has addressed all requirements and the majority of recommendations that were raised at the previous inspection.
Inadequate progress	The children's home has failed to address one or more requirements and/or has not met the majority of recommendations and/or the quality of care and outcomes for children and young people have declined since the last full inspection.

Progress

Since their previous inspection the service is judged to be making **good progress**.

This home was judged as adequate at the last full inspection in May 2012. Since that time the home has demonstrated significant improvement in the quality of care and the outcomes for young people. The home has addressed and met the two requirements and recommendation made at the previous inspection. As a result the quality of care, outcomes for young people and management of the home has improved.

The manager carries out reviews in respect of all information required in the regulations. These are now submitted regularly to Ofsted as required. This requirement is met.

In addition the home was required to ensure staffing levels and the use of agency staff did not impact on the activities available to young people. The home has successfully recruited a number of staff and has advertised to recruit to the remaining vacancies. Where agency cover is required the home uses a consistent group of agency staff to ensure continuity in the care of young people. Activities are

well planned to ensure there is appropriate staffing to supervise the activity. As a result young people are able to enjoy a variety of activities and leisure pursuits.

A recommendation was made in respect of supporting transition and promoting independence. Young people now have various targets in personal care, practical skills, and social skills. These include activities such as being able to brush their own teeth, tidy their bedroom, develop relationships outside of the home and use appropriate social interaction in the community. Staff report on the achievements and progress of young people and young people also complete a self-review to identify the progress they have made. This means they grow in confidence as well as gaining skills for independence.

Young people are consulted both individually and as a group. Good use is made of house meetings where young people choose the activities they would like to do, comment on their likes and dislikes and input into the menu choices. As a result of these meetings the young people have been able to influence the running of the home. For example, there have been new rules regarding noise and the playing of music and the menu has provided more variety and healthier options. Young people also benefit from one-to-one time with staff where they are supported to discuss their feelings and views and this means they are able to influence how they are cared for.

Young people benefit from improving care management procedures. Plans and routines are completed in more detail and reflect the individual needs of young people. Daily records are maintained that reflect the day-to-day care, behaviour and achievements of young people. However, the wording of records is not always expressed in a non-stigmatising manner and a recommendation is therefore made.

The home has improved the recording of restraints and physical intervention. Records include a debrief with staff where elements of the intervention that worked well are identified as well as areas that need to be improved. This means there is evidence of staff learning from incidents and as a result the behaviour management of young people has improved. There have been a number of sanctions imposed that do not include any element of reflection. This means young people are not afforded the opportunity to fully understand the consequences of their behaviour or take responsibility for their actions. A recommendation is therefore made.

The home has re-organised the layout of rooms and this means the young people enjoy more space and the building has a more homely atmosphere.

The manager understands the strengths and areas for development for the home and has a development plan in place. Staff receive regular supervision and an annual appraisal and feel supported in their role. The manager has taken action to address shortfalls identified by the registered provider during their regulation 33 visits. This means the young people benefit from an ever-improving service.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure children are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour, in a way that is appropriate to their age and abilities. This relates to the use of sanctions (NMS 3.6)
- ensure entries in records are legible, clearly expressed, non-stigmatising and distinguish as far as possible between fact, opinion and third party information. (NMS 22.4)

About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the progress made by the provider since the last full inspection, identifies any further strengths, any areas for improvement and makes judgements as outlined in the *Inspection of children's homes – framework for inspection*.