

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	06/01/2012
Inspector	Keith Riley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	28/09/2011
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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 (March 2011)*.

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.

Service information

Brief description of the service

This is a service that is run by the local authority providing care and support in a purpose-built facility for up to three children with severe learning disabilities.

Progress

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

At the last inspection visit the home was judged to be good overall. There were four requirements and three recommendations to further improve the service that is being delivered. All requirements and recommendations have been met.

The management were asked to ensure the following: that the kitchen, which was previously damaged in a fire, is fully equipped and operational, that confidential records are kept securely, that the Statement of Purpose contains all the matters specified in the regulations, and that there are adequate arrangements in place for the handling of medicines. These requirements are met.

The kitchen has been refurbished to a high standard. Children benefit from being able to use the facilities for activities such as meal preparation and baking.

Confidential records, such as dietary needs, are now kept securely. This means that young people's privacy is maintained.

The Statement of Purpose is accurate, relevant and contains up-to-date information about the home and the services it provides. As a result, social workers have all the information they need to make decisions about whether the home is able to meet children's needs.

There are suitable arrangements for the handling of medicines. Young people have their medicine stored in safe and suitable storage facilities.

The previous recommendation to address the minor maintenance issues around the home has been met. Children live in a safe environment that is maintained to a high standard.

The two remaining recommendations concerning safeguarding are met. A robust policy, that is well understood and followed by staff, is in place to consider any safeguarding concerns when completing body maps. Staff have annual refresher safeguarding training. Children are kept as safe as possible while being permitted to take appropriate risks.

Education is seen as a priority in the home and children have excellent support to re-

integrate back into an education environment. Education and support staff work closely together. This creates an ethos and culture in the home that helps to support children who find a classroom environment challenging. There has been good progress since the last inspection. Children who have previously disengaged from education are now attending school full-time.

The home is successful in giving children, with severe communication difficulties, a voice. For example, children are learning how to communicate their needs and emotions through picture communication systems. This means that children's anxieties and need to communicate through behaviour are minimised. Children live in a calm environment where the number of incidents requiring physical intervention is minimal. Such incidents are of low level physical intervention and of minimum duration.

Children benefit from living in an environment where staff actively and regularly seek their opinion and act upon it. Staff continue to show a commitment to seeking the views of children through innovative practices such as a 'listen to me' workbook. Over a number of weeks staff are able to determine, for example, children's preferred activities and food. Children are able to express their feelings and frustrations. As a result, challenging behaviour is minimised.

Children benefit from increased contact with their families, such as overnight visits. They are positively engaging with activities that they have struggled with previously, inside and outside the home. For example, trips out to the local park or baking a cake.

Children benefit from a staff team who understand their needs well and who are persistent in their approach. For example, children are able to attend appointments, such as the dentist, which they have struggled with in the past. Children are developing their independent living skills such as being able to wash without gestural prompts and taking items to the dishwasher. Children are being supported to make good choices such as choosing fruit at snack times.