

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC405285
Inspection date	05/02/2013
Inspector	Nicholas Murphy
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	08/08/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home provides care and accommodation for four children who have autism and learning disabilities. The home is operated by a private provider.

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 **inadequate progress**.

At the last inspection in August 2012, the home was judged to be adequate overall. Young people living here are maintaining satisfactory progress in all areas of their lives. All are attending school and doing well. Young people are in good health and the home works closely with health professionals to address any issues that arise. Staff are effective in supporting young people to become more independent. They do this, for example, by helping a young person to carry out personal care tasks and then gradually reducing their input so that the young person is able to manage the task on their own.

The home keeps young people safe. Comprehensive risk assessments and detailed care plans arising from these address all aspects of young people's needs and vulnerabilities. Although young people need high levels of supervision to ensure they do not come to harm, the home's practice ensures that their freedom of choice and personal dignity is respected. Staff consult with young people in ways which are appropriate to their ability to communicate. This ensures that staff can listen to young people's views and take account of their wishes. The use of physical restraint is extremely low, and sanctions are not used in managing behaviour.

Following the last inspection, two statutory requirements and five recommendations to improve practice were made. All but one statutory requirement have been addressed. These actions have resulted in improvements in planning for young people who are moving into adulthood. The home has also made progress in addressing shortfalls in management. Staffing at senior level has been strengthened, contingency plans are in place to deal with any staffing shortfalls, and supervision of staff is more regular and systematic. All these improvements have enabled the care and support provided to young people to be more consistent.

The provider undertakes monitoring of the home which is over and above that which is required by regulation. This process is helpful in identifying shortfalls in practice. The Registered Manager also carries out monitoring of the home's operation, although these reports have not been provided to Ofsted. This means that the regulator cannot be assured that the home is working in partnership with parents and social workers to meet the needs of young people and help them progress.

Although the home has made some progress since the last inspection, one key requirement in relation to a breach of regulation has not been met. Young people's files do not contain all necessary information from the placing authority, and historical records remain poorly organised. In particular, one young person's file has no record of the statutory reviews of the young person's care plan undertaken by their independent reviewing officer. Staff are unaware of when this young person's review took place or when the next one is due. This means that the staff do not know of any changes to the plan, or decisions which have been made, as a result of these reviews. This omission has the potential to directly impact upon the day-to-day care of the young person. Accordingly, this statutory requirement has been repeated.

Areas for improvement

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
28 (2001)	maintain in respect of each child who is accommodated at the home a record in a permanent form of the information specified in Schedule 3 and that records are kept securely in the home so long as the child is accommodated there. (Regulation 28(1)(a))	28/02/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure that reports reviewing the quality of care under Regulation 34 are supplied to Ofsted at six monthly intervals within 28 days of completion. (Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 3.14)

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*.