

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	12/03/2012
Inspector	Natalie Burton
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Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	12/10/2011
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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 privately owned home is registered to accommodate eight children and young people with learning disabilities. The home has a school and offers planned short and long-term placements. The school is registered with the Department for Education.

Progress

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

At the last inspection in October 2011, the overall rating for the service was judged as satisfactory, with five requirements and seven recommendations set within the inspection report.

The home has failed to fully address two requirements, and three recommendations made at the full inspection. The service has appointed two cooks and developed a working relationship with a nutritionist for advice. Menu choices for children are now sufficiently varied, and suitable for their needs, and some children are placed on a healthy living programme. This ensures that menu choices children made promote healthy choices and eating. The organisation has made changes to the living and communal space within the home, with a more spacious dining room area. This means there is adequate dining room facilities for all children.

A requirement from the last inspection was with regard to the recording of physical interventions and sanctions. There has been little progress with the requirement. For example, records continue to not include the effectiveness of the measure of control used, or that the children have been spoken to. This does not ensure that records are in line with regulations, or that children are given opportunity to make a comment or discuss incidents they have been involved in.

The Registered Manager has updated and reviewed the services fire risk assessment. This means that adequate precautions against risk of fire have been taken in identifying any potential hazards for children, staff and visitors.

A second requirement has been partially met. Staff have received training. For example, all staff have received sign language skills, physical intervention and safeguarding training. In addition, relevant staff have received an appraisal of their performance. This ensures that children are cared for by staff who receive training to enhance their individual skills. However, staff do not receive one-to-one supervision meetings in line with the organisation's own policy and agreement. As a result, staff do not always receive the guidance and support necessary to support their role in caring for children.

A recommendation was set with regard to the home's missing from care procedures. The service has now ensured that their procedures are compatible with the local authorities and have a joint working protocol with the police. Although there have been no missing episodes, this ensures that if children do go missing, they are protected as far as possible. All children have a placement plan, and these are implemented in the day-to-day care of the child. However, not all placement plans are up to date. This does not ensure that staff are provided with current guidance in the care of individual children.

The service has taken action to ensure that contact arrangements are effectively communicated. For example, all staff are involved in handovers, and staff who lead shifts have a good knowledge of any arrangements for children during their shift. In addition the service has satisfactory working relationships with responsible authorities with regard to supporting families and children on contact. This ensures staff understand what decisions are delegated to them, the support needed and contact arrangements are implemented for children.

A recommendation with regard to gaining children's views and wishes remains. Whilst the service has taken some action in looking at different processes, these have yet to be implemented. This does not ensure that children's views, wishes and feelings are acted upon in the day-to-day running and development of the home. A second recommendation with regard to a monitoring process of records kept by the home also remains. The service is in the process of developing a system to monitor records, and internal monitoring is conducted monthly. However, this is not with regards to identifying specific patterns and trends, or to enable immediate action to be taken to address any issues raised.

Observations during the inspection noted appropriate relationships and engagement between staff and young people. The rapport between staff, managers and children is warm, caring and respectful.

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
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose (Regulation 17B (3)(a-i))	16/04/2012
27 (2001)	ensure that all persons employed receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal. With particular regard to supervision. (Regulation 27 (4)(a))	16/04/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure the process for the monitoring of the records kept by the home identify any concerns about specific incidents and identify patterns and trends and immediate action is taken to address any issues raised by this monitoring (NMS 21.2)
- ensure records are clear, up to date and stored securely, and contribute to an understanding of the child's life. With particular regard to children's placement plans (NMS 22)
- ensure children's views, wishes and feelings are acted upon, in the day-to-day running of and development of the home. (NMS 1.1 and 1.7)