

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC408655
Inspection date	14/03/2012
Inspector	Emeline Evans
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	06/10/2011
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2012

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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 children's home is for six young people aged between 11 and 17 years. The home is run by a national organisation, providing a range of services, including education. The home provides care and accommodation for young people with a diagnosis of autism and associated syndromes who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The young people may attend the provider's school nearby.

Progress

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

The home was judged as satisfactory at the last full inspection in October 2011. However, since that time the children's home has demonstrated significant improvement in their quality of care for the children and young people. The home has suitably addressed all the requirements and recommendations that were raised at the previous inspection.

Following the last inspection, the children's guide has been produced in a form appropriate to the communication needs of the children accommodated in the home. This has resulted in the children and young people having access to individualised guides which have been used to support successful transitions into the home. The Statement of Purpose has been reviewed. This now includes all the necessary information required by regulations. This is a comprehensive document accurately reflecting the service provided in relation to supporting young people's complex and individual needs.

Children and young people's case files have been revised, this has resulted in clear and detailed information being available to staff. The placement plans are tailored to each individual and clearly indicate both short-term and long-term goals. There are clear independent living plans in place for the young people. Young people are supported to understand these plans and have detailed goals and targets in place. One young person commented that 'I cook more and have a reward chart in place for the week.' This information enables staff to support the young people to acquire the independence skills necessary to transition on to adult services.

Health plans contain a range of information and detail a range of appointments in chronological order. This ensures up to date information is shared with necessary professionals. Consent forms for appropriate medical treatment has been obtained for all of the children and young people. Children and young people's files now contain a wide range of documents including individual education plans, statements of special education needs and looked after review reports. This information informs staff of current actions needed to meet children and young people's needs.

The home was asked to improve on the recording of restraints. New systems have been introduced to the home, which now ensures all recording is in line with legislation. The system in place cross-references to all incidents involving the children and young people in the home. This is a comprehensive process of which staff are aware and ensures effective monitoring and recording is taking place. Behaviour management plans have been revised and clearly outline appropriate sanctions for each child and young person. These documents also include agreed physical restraint techniques. All staff are trained in the use of restraint and advanced techniques are no longer required in the home.

Since the last inspection, the home has focused on healthy eating. One young person commented 'we eat healthier food now.' The Registered Manager monitors the diet of the children and young people and has incorporated fruit into snack times. Staff use innovative ways to introduce new fruit and vegetables into the children and young people's diet. Children and young people's dietary needs dictated by health and religion are reflected in care plans and menus are adapted as necessary.

Staff have received training and support to enhance their work with individual children and young people. The speech and language team deliver regular training in methods of communication to staff. Weekly goals are set for education and residential settings to enable the staff to support and progress the non-verbal children and young people. Staff comment that 'young people have benefited from this input and have improved remarkably in communicating their needs.' This holistic approach between professionals, education staff and the residential provision is enabling good outcomes for the children and young people to be achieved.

The Registered Manager formally reviews Schedule 6 items on a regular basis. This is resulting in a strategic overview and awareness of key issues in the home. However, it is not clear how the manager is monitoring sanctions in the home. The Regulation 34 reports do not indicate that routine consultation with the parents, children and young people and placing authorities is taking place. Therefore, a requirement has been raised to ensure this is documented. Following the last inspection, Regulation 33 visits now take place during a time when children and young people are present. There is an improved approach to spending time with children and young people and the staff team to seek their views and observe the quality of care provided.

There is a commitment from the management and staff in the home to improve outcomes for children and young people. Staff have positive and realistic aspirations for children and young people. Children and young people benefit from a homely environment; the front door and individual toy cupboards are no longer locked and the garden area is in the process of being developed. However, some of the children and young people's bedroom doors still do not close properly. This has the potential to put the children and young people at risk should there be a fire. Children and young people are positive about the care they receive and describe the home 'as good.' Children and young people know and are supported to understand what is expected of them. As a result, young people receive structured care which is based on their individual identified needs.

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
32 (2001)	ensure adequate precautions against the risk of fire are put in place; specifically the maintenance of fire doors (Regulation 32 (1)(a))	09/04/2012
34 (2001)	ensure the monitoring arrangements under Regulation 34 include all the matters set out in Schedule 6 and provide for consultation with children, their parents and placing authorities. (Regulation 34 (1)(a)(3))	09/04/2012

Recommendations

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