

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	23/01/2013
Inspector	Bridgette Lowe
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	30/10/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is for six young people. 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 also have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The young people may attend the provider's school nearby.

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 **satisfactory progress**.

At the last full inspection in October 2012 the home was judged as being good in its overall effectiveness. Outcomes for young people and leadership and management were judged as outstanding with all other areas judged as good. There were no requirements or recommendations raised at the previous inspection.

Since the last inspection the Registered Manager has left the home in December 2012. Good interim management arrangements are in place with staff confirming they feel well supported, and the quality of care afforded to young people continues to be of a high standard. The head of care at the school attached to the home has overall management responsibility, with the senior team leader in overall day-to-day control of the management of the home. At the time of inspection a new manager had just been appointed. It was unclear when his starting date was to commence as a formal notification has not been made to Ofsted as required by the regulations. However managers confirmed on inspection this is likely to be in the very near future

to ensure staff and young people are fully supported by the new manager.

Young people benefit from a committed and dedicated staff team that work cohesively to ensure they are consistent in their care practices. Currently the home is understaffed, which, on the odd occasion, has impacted on young people being able to access leisure activities as frequently as the team have arranged. Staff confirm they work hard to fill the gaps in the staff rota through overtime and the use of school staff supporting the team. This means that staff who understand the needs of the young people work consistently with them and in turn it keeps a harmonious atmosphere within the home. Every effort is made, by the management team, to ensure staffing does not have a negative impact on outcomes for young people and a recruitment drive is currently underway.

Regular and consistent monitoring is being undertaken routinely by the staff delegated with interim management responsibilities. Also regular monitoring is undertaken by an independent visitor on a monthly basis. However, on one occasion, a monitoring report undertaken by the independent visitor was not forwarded to Ofsted. Also Ofsted has only received one monitoring report from the management in relation to their internal monitoring of all areas outlined under the regulations, in the last 12 month period. These minor administration errors have not impacted on the quality of care and safety of young people. However, it means the regulator has not been provided with a full picture of how the home was operating in order it could ensure the safety and well-being of young people continued to be promoted.

Young people continue to develop and live in a safe and caring environment. Young people's behaviour continues to improve as young people become settled in their home and learn to manage their behaviour with staff support. The use of physical intervention continues to be very low as staff are extremely competent in managing young people with challenging behaviours. As a result of improved behaviour some young people have benefitted from longer home contact stays and improved relationships with family members. There continues to be good use of communication systems used by young people to promote their understanding and enable greater choice. Young people continue to develop their independent living skills, with one young person looking forward to nicer weather so they can start to grow their own vegetables. Young people confirmed they are happy at the home, and it was 'good' and 'fun' living there. School attendance continues to be excellent; young people attend the organisation's school that is within close proximity to the home. This provides young people with the opportunity for learning to cope with transitions and structuring their day around normalised daily school/home routines. Staff demonstrate a very caring and nurturing level of support to young people. It is clearly evident that all young people are very happy and relaxed in the environment and in the company of staff.

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
33 (2001)	ensure a copy of all reports required under this regulation are supplied to Ofsted (Regulation 33 (4) (c) (a))	28/02/2013
7 (2001)	ensure notice is given to Ofsted of the name of the person appointed to be Registered Manager and the date their appointment is to take effect. (Regulation 7 (2) (a) (b))	15/02/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure the overall number, competent and deployment of staff can fulfil the home's Statement of Purpose and meet the individual needs of all children resident in the home. This relates to shortfalls in staff numbers not impacting on young people accessing leisure opportunities (NMS 17.1)
- ensure regulation 34 reports, in line with good practice, are completed at six monthly intervals and a copy of every report sent to Ofsted within twenty eight days of completion. (Children Act Guidance and Regulations Volume 5 (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*.