

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Angela Whiteley
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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

The home, run by a local authority provides accommodation for up to 10 young people with complex needs arising from profound and multiple learning disabilities, autism and other associated health needs. The home provides a short breaks service.

Progress

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

At the last full inspection in October 2011, the overall judgement was good. The children's home has demonstrated continued improvement in the quality of care and outcomes for its young people. Two requirements and one recommendation were made at the last inspection and the home has made good progress in meeting these.

The Regulation 33 visitor is consulting with young people and parents who access the short break service as part of the monitoring and quality assurance system. This ensures young people's needs are central to the running of the home and their views and opinions and those of parent's and professionals are represented when assessing the quality of care that young people receive. Young people have individualised placement plans that are regularly reviewed. They now include details in respect of any electronic monitoring devices that are required to ensure the welfare and safety of young people who receive a short break service. A review of the system for gaining consents from parents, young people and placing authorities is underway and may be included in the admission form. The children's guide has been reviewed to include relevant contact details; however, the guide has yet to be distributed to young people who use the service.

Gathering the views of young people, parents and professionals is a particular strength of this service provider. A range of communication methods are in place to enable young people to influence the home's operation and future direction. There are many examples of how staff have listened to young people and considered their views. For example, young people are actively involved in menu planning. They have said they want their own bedding when they come to stay. Young people were unsure who their link workers were and now have lists in the games area to remind them. Young people want the garden to be more child-friendly and are completing questionnaires to give their views. Young people are actively involved in local charity events, which help them to integrate into the community.

Young people learn independence skills through carefully considered individualised transition plans. Young people are supported to learn new skills and move forward at their own pace in preparation for adult life. Equality and diversity is actively pursued with staff encouraging young people to access a range of purposeful and enjoyable activities.

There is a strong emphasis at this home on young people developing socially and emotionally. Staff encourage and promote young people's friendships, carefully considering admissions to allow young people to visit together.

The experienced and enthusiastic staff group are well qualified to meet the diverse needs of the young people placed. Ensuring the staff team receive appropriate training to develop further their knowledge and skills is a priority at this home, this ensures they can continue to meet the emerging needs of young people with complex needs. Staff are developing stronger links with other agencies particularly in health and social care promoting more joint working and making positive contributions to care planning for young people who are being referred to the service.

Young people's medication needs are a key area for staff to manage. Robust checks are in place to ensure medication is correct. Detailed records are in place demonstrating thorough, and safe procedures are followed. Staff receive regular training, including specialist training to meet any special medical needs.

Young people who receive a short break service receive a warm welcome from staff. The home is maintained to an excellent standard and is attractively decorated and well furnished. Its design and location are particularly suited to its function.

There are robust quality assurance systems in place to monitor the operation and management of this home. The manager regularly reviews the quality of care to ensure any shortfalls are identified and suitable action taken to address them. This includes feedback from family, social workers and other professionals. Young people are regularly consulted. The Statement of Purpose is a working document under review to ensure it meets the aims and objectives of the home, however, there is no current development plan in place. A recommendation is raised in order to improve outcomes for young people in this respect. These measures ensure the standards within the home remain high.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- make sure that subject to the child's age and understanding, the children's home ensures the child receives the children's guide at the point of placement and that the contents of the children's guide is explained to the child in a way that is accessible (NMS 13.4)
- ensure the registered person has a written development plan, reviewed annually, for the future of the home. (NMS 15.2)