

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC396813
Inspection date	14/02/2012
Inspector	Paula Lahey
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Date of last inspection	05/10/2011
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This setting is owned by a charity and is registered to accommodate 50 children and young people, with physical disabilities, complex health needs and learning disabilities. On site is a non-maintained special school catering for children and young people aged three to 19 years with complex special needs. A team of nurses, therapists and specialists, funded by the Primary Care Trust are also based on site and provide medical support.

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 inspection in October 2011, the overall quality rating for the service was judged as good with one requirement and four recommendations made. The home continues to demonstrate ongoing improvements in the quality of care provided and has suitably maintained positive outcomes for young people. One requirement and two recommendations from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed to the benefit of young people. Some attention has been made to the remaining recommendations but these have yet to be fully addressed and subsequently they have been reinstated. These relate to ensuring a record is maintained of young people's views following the use of restraint and that agency staff files contain all the required elements.

Both the sanction and restraint log books have been suitably revised to ensure all information as listed in Regulation 17b can now be recorded. Records demonstrate

that restraint has continued to be used infrequently and only as a last response in order to ensure young people's safety. Managers have produced written guidance for staff on how to record incidents of restraint and sanctions appropriately. They have coupled this with direct training and this has resulted in improved documentation. Each entry is monitored by managers and records are maintained to record the effectiveness of the measure used. Whilst this is a good step forward the focus of monitoring incidents has related more to ensuring that records are complete and consistent with the home's guidance. This has resulted in managers not suitably recognising that records contain a list of the occurrence of de-brief meetings rather than the detail of the actual discussions held with young people and staff and their views on the measure used. In addition, monitoring did not effectively identify the use of one restraint technique that was not consistent with a young person's written behaviour support plan and approved techniques. As a result a requirement and recommendation have been made.

Since the last inspection amendments have been made to the process of checking potential candidate's employment history. Managers ensure that gaps are clearly identified prior to interview, that these are thoroughly discussed and responses appropriately recorded on file. This meets safe recruitment guidance and duly safeguards young people.

The home demonstrates a commitment to improving practice and opportunities for young people. Since the last inspection Regulation 33 reports have been modified and now clearly detail the outcome of discussions visitors have with young people, families and staff. Regulation 33 visits are generally challenging of the provision and appropriately identify ways to improve the quality of provision and outcomes for young people. Action is taken promptly by managers and senior staff in response to reports.

Managers have produced an additional development plan following a recent external audit of the quality of provision and from their own findings during Regulation 33 and 34 monitoring. Actions taken include: producing a DVD version of the children's guide, providing all residences with SKYPE, reviewing working patterns to rota in handover time, developing house managers' skills and knowledge, and more effectively evidencing young people's progress in their records. Some progress has been made towards addressing these developments. Managers anticipate that these developments will improve outcomes for young people.

Consulting with children and seeking their views continues to play an important role and is having a positive impact on outcomes. House meetings and student council groups are held regularly and enable young people to make suggestions and voice their opinions. The weekly advocacy group continues to have a strong voice within the organisation. The numbers of young people attending this group have significantly increased since the last inspection as they are seeing the benefit of expressing their views and having them listened to. Since the last inspection young people have provided their views on a wide range of topics in relation to school, the residences, the support they receive, how safe they feel in the home and how well they feel listened to. The Registered Manager has recently received a written report

documenting the findings from this group and is taking action in respect of key points made.

Managers have the welfare of young people and staff at the heart of the home and encourage them each to achieve well. Staff are genuinely enthusiastic about their care of young people and there is a commitment to providing a quality service.

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
17A (2001)	ensure that where a measure of restraint is used on a child accommodated in the children's home the measure is proportionate. This relates specifically to ensuring that only approved techniques as detailed in the child's behaviour support plan are used.(Regulation 17A)	01/03/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure that where any sanction, disciplinary measures or restraint are used, children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records kept by the home (NMS 3.18)
- ensure that a record of the recruitment and vetting checks which have been carried out on agency staff includes the information described in NMS 16.3(a)-(f) (NMS 16.3)
- ensure that monitoring is used effectively to identify any concerns about specific incidents and to identify any patterns and trends. Immediate action is taken to address any issues raised by this monitoring.(NMS 21.2)

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)*.