

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Amanda Ellis
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Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	21/12/2011
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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 service provides residential short-breaks care for up to 11 young people with learning and physical disabilities aged eight to 19-years-old. The home is run by a local authority.

Progress

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

At the last inspection in December 2011, the overall effectiveness of the home was judged to be good, with one requirement and four recommendations set.

The home has fully addressed the requirement made at the full inspection. The requirement to ensure that the registered person supplies a report to Ofsted in respect of any review conducted is met with the routine submission of relevant reports.

The recommendation in respect of the young person's guide has been met. The home has amended the young person's guide to make clear reference to a summary of what the home sets out to do for young people. The guide is child-friendly and written in a user-friendly style. It contains information on how they can find out about their rights and how to secure access to an independent advocate. The guide provides information outlining how to contact a variety of agencies including their Independent Reviewing Officer; the Children's Rights Director and Ofsted if they wish to raise a concern with inspectors.

A recommendation was made to ensure that the home has a written development plan. Since the last inspection the home has implemented an action plan in response to addressing the shortfalls identified within the full inspection; developed a child specific planning framework to optimise positive outcomes for young people and has devised the home's Improvement Plan for 2012-2013. The home has demonstrated that it reviews its development plans annually and in response to the home's current operational needs and resources.

With regard to the recommendation to ensure regular monitoring of all records kept by the home and to ensure compliance with the home's policies, identifying any concerns about specific incidents, patterns and trends. The home undertook a review in response to this and revision of all risk assessments has been undertaken. The recommendation included the need for specific attention to seeking the outstanding references, photo identification and driving licence details of existing staff. The home continues to pursue these details with existing staff and ensure that all relief staff supply this information prior to commencing employment.

The final recommendation was to ensure that a written or electronic record is kept by the home detailing the time and date and length of each supervision held for each member of staff, including the registered person. This recommendation has been raised again following this inspection as it has not been satisfactorily addressed

Young people who attend the short breaks service receive care and support which is responsive to their individual needs. The home provides care for young people who have learning and physical disabilities. The home provides communal areas to relax, play and dine and private bedrooms for each young person. The home has a small room with sensory equipment and two outdoor play areas, with a small range of playground equipment. This area provides space for young people to exercise and exert energy.

Young people participate in a wide range of stimulating activities. The young people have access to the wider community and are encouraged to participate in a variety of pursuits. Young people benefit from frequent holidays and trips to places of interest. This enables young people to extend their skills and knowledge. Young people benefit from improved outcomes as a result of social participation.

The home provides a comfortable environment with a homely feel. However, there are some areas of potential improvement which have led to further recommendations. The interior and exterior of the home could benefit from regular maintenance, with specific regard to superficial decoration and carpentry. The home is currently in the process of recruiting a new maintenance man. The young person's bedrooms have basic furniture but are personalised for their stays. Several of the bedrooms have large windows which do not offer sufficient privacy.

Young people are encouraged and supported to become actively involved in charitable work and fundraising. The home has an ethos of enabling young people to reach their full potential. This participation enables young people to contribute to their local community and develop their own self-esteem. In addition this involvement promotes their social skills through positive interaction with their peers and other people.

The home continues to ensure that young people have high standards of care provided in relation to their health. This includes their medical needs. Young people receive sound medical care by staff who are appropriately trained to administer medication and first aid. The home benefits from the inclusion of a specialist Learning Disability Nurse who works alongside the staff in delivering training. Physical activity is encouraged and the young people enjoy healthy and nutritious meals. Young people thrive in this home because healthy lifestyles are promoted.

All young people in the home regularly attend appropriate educational provision. The home support young people to attend and ensure consistent communication with education providers and parents. This results in young people benefiting from improved educational outcomes. Young people learn the skills and knowledge which will enable them to make the transition to adult life.

Staff value the involvement and inclusion of young people. Consultation with young people within the home ensures the full inclusion of all young people, regardless of disability or communication needs. Young people are actively encouraged and supported to express their views on how the service operates and their views acted upon. However, the home has no provision for young people to be able to make phone calls in private without reference to staff working in the home. A requirement in regards to this area has been made at this inspection.

There has been one reported incident of a young person going missing from the home since the last inspection. The effective implementation of the joint protocol for children missing in care ensured the rapid and safe return of this young person. Since this event there has been a review of work practices, risk assessments amended and recommendations for improved security procedures within the home.

The key strength of this service is the professionalism and commitment of the managers and staff in enabling young people with learning disabilities and complex needs to reach their full potential. Young people thrive because the staff team and managers are knowledgeable, experienced and highly skilled

This inspection has identified good practice and further areas of development.

The home has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The management team are clear about the developments and improvements necessary to ensure that young people receive excellent standards of care. Continued regular internal and external monitoring of this service is required, to enable the development and improved quality of care and outcomes for young people.

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
15 (2001)	ensure that young people are provided with a telephone on which to make and receive calls in private. (Regulation 15 (4)(a))	20/04/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure the home provides a comfortable and homely environment, with specific regard to the maintenance and decoration of the home and adequate measures to ensure privacy is protected with regard to bedroom windows (NMS 10.3)
- ensure a written or electronic record is kept by the home detailing the time and date and length of each supervision held for each member of staff, including the registered person. (NMS 19.5)