

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC396813
<b>Inspection date</b>	10/10/2012
<b>Inspector</b>	Anna Williams
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	14/02/2012
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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

**Outstanding:** a service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

**Good:** a service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements

**Adequate:** a service that only meets minimum requirements

**Inadequate:** a service that does not meet minimum requirements

## Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is judged to be **good**.

This children's home provides a good quality of care to children who access its services. Children make exceptional progress in relation to their starting points across all aspects of their welfare and development. Highly effective working relationships between the residential care team and the on-site health and education services ensure that children's needs are fully identified and met. Children feel safe at the home. Parents and carers speak positively about the impact the home has had on the lives of their children. Diversity is well-celebrated within the service.

Shortfalls identified during this inspection relate to ensuring that there are sufficient staff on every shift to meet the individual assessed needs of children. CCTV is used within some children's bedrooms overnight as a monitoring and early fire detection tool. However, the use of the CCTV is not in line with regulation and is not monitored constantly overnight. This impacts on children's privacy. A minor shortfall in recruitment was immediately addressed during the inspection. This did not impact negatively on children. Some staff do not receive regular supervision and some supervision records are incomplete. This does not ensure that all children are cared for by appropriately supervised staff. The Statement of Purpose does not describe the custom of some children moving bungalows during some weekends. This does not ensure that parents, carers and children are clear about how the service is run.

The Registered Manager and senior management team have a comprehensive

improvement plan in place. This plan has clearly identified the shortfall in staffing. However, planning focuses on a strategic plan. It does not identify interim action to address immediate staff shortfalls.

## 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
5 (2001)	review and where appropriate, revise the Statement of Purpose and the children's guide. In particular, include details of where children who access weekend residential care will be accommodated (Regulation 5 (a))	17/12/2012
22 (2001)	ensure that electronic or mechanical monitoring devices for the surveillance of children are not used in a children's home except for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, and where the conditions identified in a - d are met (Regulation 22 (1) (a - d))	17/12/2012
25 (2001)	ensure that there is at all times, having regard to the number and needs (including any needs arising from any disability) of the children accommodated there, a sufficient number of suitably qualified, competent and experienced staff working at the children's home (Regulation 25 (1) (a - b))	17/12/2012
27 (2001)	ensure all staff employed receive appropriate supervision (Regulation 27 (4) (a))	17/12/2012
32 (2001)	remove from the fire risk assessment all reference to the use of CCTV in all rooms as a protective measure and early detection system in case of fire. (Regulation 32 (1A) (b))	17/12/2012

### Recommendations

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

- ensure that good recruitment practice is consistently followed, with specific reference to ensuring that any gap in employment history is fully addressed prior to a member of staff commencing work. (NMS 16.2)

### Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for children and young people are **outstanding**.

Children make exceptional progress in all aspects of their welfare and development while living at or accessing the home's short-break service. Comments from parents and carers include 'the bungalow has made my child's standard of life better.' Children make extensive progress in building confidence. Some children's mobility has progressed so extensively they are now making independent movements.

Children's health benefits from the comprehensive health support services on-site. Some children are now of a healthy weight. Comments from parents and carers include 'We have seen a rapid improvement in the health of our child. The bungalow works well with the clinical services to make sure our child's medication is reviewed and monitored.' Some children's self-harming and challenging behaviours have reduced significantly. Some children now fully engage in physiotherapy interventions and their overall stamina has improved. This benefits their well-being now and in the future.

All children have full attendance at school. Children have made excellent progress educationally through innovative practice and a consistent approach. Some children now express choices, thoughts and feelings in a confident manner. Comments from parents and carers include 'my child has progressed hugely with their communication. My child can make a clear choice now. My child can now communicate decisions about what they want to do and how they are feeling.'

Children maintain contact with families and those who are significant to them through letters and pictures, email, Skype and by telephone. This ensures that all children maintain links to those important to them. Children engage in a wide range of activities. These include on-site activities such as arts and crafts, games, piano lessons, gardening and cooking. Trips within the community include going to local youth discos, the cinema, seafronts, shopping and local attractions such as museums. Some children are members of a local Scout group. Some children took part in a summer activity holiday at an outdoor education centre. This trip included varied activities such as canoeing, campfires and a using a zip wire. This offered children the opportunity to try new experiences and make new friends.

Children learn skills that will help them now and when they move into adulthood. Some children are now able to independently use their motorised wheelchair and safely manoeuvre it. This offers children freedom and independence. Some children make immense progress with personal care needs. This supports children to learn appropriate skills which maximises their personal levels of independence.

## **Quality of care**

The quality of the care is **good**.

Children enjoy positive and constructive relationships with each other. Relationships between staff and children are warm and appropriate. Staff demonstrate excellent skills in communicating with children with a wide range of complex communication needs. Comments from parents and carers include 'I feel my child has a fantastic

quality of care. The staff are patient and kind. They keep my child safe and well.' and 'I always feel Ok with ringing up and speaking to staff at the bungalow. They are always professional and keep me up-to-date with progress or any issues.'

Children influence the running of the home through house meetings, the advocacy group and the school council. Through these meetings, children have seen changes in activities, menus, equipment and toys for the home. Recently, children have chosen new furniture for their bedrooms which is now on order. This demonstrates to children that their views are important and are acted upon.

Children have comprehensive care plans which are highly personalised. These plans are regularly reviewed with education and health colleagues on site. Issues relating to the individual child's personal identity and ethnicity are positively addressed within care plans. This multi-disciplinary approach ensures that children's unique needs are clearly identified and fully met. Diversity is well-celebrated. Children write to a group of young people in Africa. They share letters and drawings and learn about the differences in cultures. This supports a positive approach to learning about and celebrating cultural differences.

Medication systems on site are safe and effective. Since the last inspection, the bungalows have benefited from the addition of medication preparation rooms. These provide ample safe storage for medication and allow staff undertaking medication administration a dedicated space to prepare without distraction. This supports safe working practices around medication. Children benefit from highly effective joined up working with colleagues from clinical health services on site. This ensures that children's physical, emotional and psychological needs are well met.

Each child has a link worker within the on-site school. This supports strong links between education and residential staff. Children's educational goals are well known by care staff. This proactive approach supports children's educational progress. Comments from parents and carers include 'the education staff and the residential staff work well together to help my child progress in all areas. My child does activities after school which help my child to learn more, play and have fun. The care and attention is 24 -hours.' Children engage well with activities on offer. Children have access to the school swimming pool and multi-sensory studio out of school hours with suitable staff supervision and support.

The accommodation provided is maintained to a good standard. Since the last inspection, some bungalows on site have benefited from the addition of specialist baths. All children have recently received new beds, which are adapted to the child's individual needs. Children personalise their bedroom space with photos, posters and mementos. Bathrooms are suitably adapted to meet the needs of children accessing the home. All the accommodation is clean and hygienic. This ensures that children stay in a comfortable and homely environment, which fully meets their needs.

### **Safeguarding children and young people**

The service is **good** at keeping children and young people safe and feeling safe.

Children say they feel safe within the home. Parents and carers feel that the safety of their child is given a high priority within the home. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of safeguarding procedures. Investigations into allegations or suspicions of harm are handled promptly and appropriately. This ensures the safety and welfare of children.

Care plans, while generally comprehensive, do not adequately demonstrate how CCTV which is used within some children's bedrooms overnight is promoting the welfare of the child concerned, nor do they justify the intrusion on their privacy. While parental consent is sought, consent is not obtained from placing authorities, nor the child themselves taking into account their age and understanding. The fire risk assessment refers to CCTV within each residential room as a protective measure for early fire detection. However, not all children have the system turned on, night staff do not monitor the CCTV image constantly throughout the night and there is a proper fire detection system not reliant on observation.

Staff are aware of procedures to follow if a child is missing. However, positively there have been no incidences since the last inspection. There have been no records of restraint and only two sanctions imposed. Staff work successfully with children to set clear and consistent boundaries. Children do not identify bullying as an issue. Staff are vigilant about any possible targeting behaviours between children. This supports a cohesive and harmonious community.

Safe recruitment is managed to a good standard. However, a minor shortfall in one personnel file identified on inspection demonstrated that the school recruitment policy had not been followed on one occasion. Immediate action taken on inspection fully addressed the shortfall highlighted. This did not impact negatively on children. Volunteers are suitably vetted and receive an appropriate induction into the school. This ensures the safety of children.

Visitors are clearly identified and appropriately chaperoned across the site. A new swipe card entry system was introduced recently across the large site. This enhances the safety and the security of all using the site. Current building works on site are suitably fenced in to prevent any unauthorised access by children. Systems are in place which clearly identify authorised contractor site personnel. These steps ensure the safety of children while these works take place. Children are safeguarded by effective health and safety checks across the whole school site. Fire drills take place on a regular basis across all the accommodation buildings. The school site is well-maintained. Any defective equipment or damage is promptly addressed. This ensures children live in a safe and appropriately secure environment.

## **Leadership and management**

The leadership and management of the children's home are **adequate**.

The children's home has a permanent Registered Manager in post. This offers the service stability and consistent leadership. The Statement of Purpose describes the overall aims and ethos of the organisation in good detail. However, it does not

describe the custom of some children moving bungalows for weekend care on occasions. It does not indicate how children will be supported to understand the change in their environment and bedroom. The children's guide also does not explain to children that they may move rooms. Consequently, parents and carers, placing authorities and children do not have full information on how the service is run.

There have been no complaints from children or others regarding the children's home since the last inspection. Records are clear and stored securely. They are up-to-date and contain photos and detail achievements. These provide a positive record of each child's stay within the service.

Formal staff supervision within the home is not consistent. Some staff receive regular formal supervision, which is clearly recorded. Other staff receive minimal formal supervision, and some staff one-to-one records are incomplete. This does not ensure all children are cared for by appropriately supervised staff.

Staff training needs are identified and well met. The current percentage of staff trained in the national vocational qualification at level 3 or Diploma trained staff is 83%. Recent training has included 'mental capacity awareness', 'sensory awareness' and 'food hygiene'. This ensures that children are cared for by staff who are suitably trained.

Staffing levels do not always reflect the complex needs which some groups of children present. On occasions, one-to-one staff for an identified child may be used for a short period to support the safe caring of another child, for example when hoisting. Children are not left with unsafe staffing levels. However, individual one-to-one care is used by staff to cover a shortfall in basic levels. This practice has already been identified by senior management as unacceptable. However, an interim strategy to address this has not started.

A previous requirement to ensure that only approved behaviour management techniques are used has been fully met. This ensures the safety and well-being of children who may display challenging behaviours. Records of measures of control now contain the views of children. This ensures that children's views are clearly recorded. Agency staff recruitment checks now contain the information detailed within national minimum standards. This demonstrates there is careful vetting of temporary staff who support children in the home. Internal monitoring of incidents now takes place and patterns or trends are pro-actively identified. This supports the overall internal monitoring system, which drives forward improvement within the home.

Regulation 33 monitoring visits take place, involve children and are suitably challenging. The Registered Manager and senior management team have a comprehensive improvement plan in place. This highlights that the current staff structure is not fully effective and will be reviewed. The timescale for this review and consultation is over the forthcoming months. However, it does not address the immediate staff shortfalls as identified on inspection. This document links to the whole school development plan, and together they drive forward improved outcomes



for children.

## 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 main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the *Inspections of children's homes – framework for inspection* (March 2011) and the evaluation schedule for children's homes.