

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	06/12/2012
Inspector	Paula Lahey
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	01/08/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The service is run by an established private provider. The home is registered to provide medium to long term care and accommodation for up to four young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities. The home is managed as two separate units within one house.

The registered provider bases its practices on the integration of home, education and therapeutic services working together to meet the needs of the child. Young people living in the home can attend a school also run by the provider and have access to in-house therapeutic 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 **good progress**.

At the full inspection in August 2012, the overall effectiveness rating for the service was judged as outstanding with no requirements or recommendations made. Despite only a short time having elapsed since that inspection, the home has continued to improve.

All young people have made at least good progress towards meeting their individual placement aims, with the vast majority making exceptional progress. This includes educational achievement and full time attendance at school, developing independence, maintaining and improving family contacts and not engaging in risk taking behaviour such as going missing or developing inappropriate relationships.

The vast majority of young people enjoy living in this home, they are settled and secure in the knowledge that they are cared for and kept safe. Not all young people share this view, and at times have found it hard to accept the support, boundaries and expectations that are in place. They report finding it difficult to accept that they cannot smoke, are discouraged from eating unhealthy foods daily and are not able to engage in relationships and/or activities that may place them at risk of harm. Staff have remained consistent in their approach to ensure that young people receive good quality care and clear direction about how to maintain a safe and healthy lifestyle. Consequently, young people are progressing in these areas resulting in improvements for their longer-term outcomes.

All young people are attending school full time with each making good progress within their individual learning abilities and targets. All young people are successfully engaged with positive community based activities, such as horse riding, drama clubs, dance and singing lessons. Young people enjoy this opportunity to make friends and develop their talents.

The service appropriately supports young people to develop their independence. All young people choose how to spend their individual monies, with some young people taking direct responsibility for their budgeting and saving. Independence programmes are individualised and developmental and support young people to acquire appropriate life skills and have positive community experiences. For some young people this will start by being fully supported by staff, moving onto free time for short periods and building up to travelling independently on the train and/or bus to meet with family and friends. Not all young people feel positive about this system and would like more personal freedom without staff supervision. The home is appropriately looking into how to achieve this; while complying with court orders, maintaining vulnerable young people's protection and developing their personal safety skills.

Young people who have recently left the home have successfully transitioned to adult placements and further education, or returned to their family home while continuing with full time education in the provider's school. For all young people this progress has far exceeded the expectation professionals and placing authorities had prior to their placement. This progress is a result of the exceptional care, nurture, guidance and empathic support young people receive. Their self-esteem, confidence, and enduring resilience is evident.

Since the last inspection, the service have worked in partnership with safeguarding agencies including the police, mental health services and the local area designated officer. This has proved invaluable to ensure staff respond appropriately and consistently to issues of concern. Young people's risk assessments and placement plans clearly document the actions staff are required to take to ensure young people's safety, report concerns promptly and protect all parties.

The service continues to exceed the Children's Home Regulations and national minimum standards. A well-established and very strong manager and senior team continue to focus on developing the service further in order to improve outcomes for

young people. The service development plan has been revised and actions identified have been addressed.

Young people who live in the home have revised the welcome guide to make it more child friendly. Young people have written a personal account of what it is like to live in the home, the service young people can expect to receive, and how the staff will support them to achieve their goals. This document is person centred, clear, and accessible and would provide new young people with a hearty welcome.

Staff have received up-to-date refresher training in child protection, physical restraint and health and safety. As a result, responsibilities are clearly delegated and they are certain about their roles and the organisation ethos. Young people benefit from well-established systems and effective leadership from senior staff.

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*.