

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	08/01/2013
Inspector	Jennie Christopher
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	03/05/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The service is provided by a local registered charity. It provides short breaks for up to five young people with learning difficulties, sensory impairment or physical disabilities.

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 last full inspection in May 2012, the overall quality rating for the service was judged as outstanding with one recommendation. The service demonstrates continuous improvement in the quality of care provided with a focused commitment to service development. A particular strength of the service is the support they extend to young people's families, as well as providing a positive 'home-from-home' environment for young people.

The previous recommendation concerned repair and modernisation of one of the bathrooms. This is a work in progress including the purchase of specialist bathing equipment. The bathroom is currently not in use while the necessary improvements are taking place.

Young people continue to receive well-planned care from the committed and caring staff team. Young people have a positive view of the care that they receive and their relationships with staff are excellent and they feel safe. Staff are consistent in their implementation of health and action plans, which have enabled young people to enjoy rewarding breaks in a comfortable environment. The high staffing ratio

ensures young people benefit from the support and attention they require to access activities while keeping safe. The culture within the service celebrates individuality and diversity. As a result, young people receive high quality care based on their individual needs.

Since the last inspection, extensive work has been done to evaluate the current level of service and to identify areas that positively affect young people's outcomes. However, while there is an active focus on improvement and evaluation, current monitoring tools do not always evidence this evaluation and scrutiny of records.

For example, young people's communication and skills have been improved by inclusive technology. The home is introducing touch-screen technology and specialist electronic programmes for communication and learning to ensure young people have access to the same tools they do at home and school. 'Switches' are also being piloted to enable young people to have greater choice and freedom. One young person is now able to control his projector in the bedroom by using eye movement to operate a switch, as well as using it to make choices and answer questions. Senior staff and managers have implemented further evaluation and recording tools to demonstrate work undertaken to support young people and improve outcomes. This includes details of activities and programmes they have been involved in, such as the 'Outside Play Challenge'. Young people explored different outdoors activities from gardening and hugging trees, to boat trips and visiting farms. Evaluation of the challenge and feedback from young people has resulted in a self-selection 'activities ideas' book for young people.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure Regulation 33 visits include scrutiny of how the home is supporting young people to enjoy and achieve and that compliance with regulations is inspected (Volume 5, statutory guidance, para 3.12)
- evaluate Regulation 34 monitoring to identify trends and concerns so that the home can continually improve the quality of care provided (Volume 5, statutory guidance, para 3.14).

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*.