

Inspection report for children's home

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| Unique reference number | SC425985 |
| Inspection date | 14/01/2013 |
| Inspector | Sonya Robinson |
| Type of inspection | Interim |
| Provision subtype | Children's home |

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| Date of last inspection | 10/05/2012 |
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is owned by a national organisation. It offers accommodation for seven children and young people who experience autistic spectrum disorder and a possible learning disability. Most young people who access the service attend the organisation's school.

Placements in the home are generally provided during term time, with accommodation being provided on weekdays and some weekends. Periods of short-break care are agreed on an individual basis. Children and young people who access this service can be aged between five and 19 years.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

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| 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**.

Children and young people were unavailable during this interim inspection.

At the last full inspection in May 2012, the home was judged as adequate overall. At that inspection, Ofsted asked the provider to make improvements in some areas.

Since the last inspection the medication systems are much improved and issues raised on the previous inspection have been resolved; the policy has been updated and staff have received additional training. Staff describe the training as 'good' and relevant to the needs of the young people in their care.

The safeguarding policy has been reviewed, updated and refers to good practice

guidance, legislation and to Ofsted. This provides staff with up-to-date information to help keep children and young people safe.

Children and young people can communicate their views on aspects of their care and support as regular young people's meetings and individual key work sessions are now taking place. They have recently included such topics as achievements, staying safe and the decoration of bedrooms and some communal areas. This also includes planning activities such as what to 'look at' in the 'culture club', a weekly event whereby children and young people seek out information in accordance with their age and understanding regarding a particular culture, festival, celebration, event or country. For example, they have explored Hanukkah, Halloween and Christmas. They have also researched various countries' music, food, costume and identity, such as Scotland, Italy and latterly New Zealand, where some children and young people tried 'boil up' a traditional dish made from pork and with root vegetable dumplings, which many enjoyed. This means that they gaining an understanding of the world around them in a fun way. Specialist diets are also catered for in this home.

Staff say they work very well as a team and that they have regular staff meetings with their team members. This means they are able to consider young people's progress and modify any plans to ensure they remain current. Consequently they are able to provide good care to children and young people.

Since the last inspection the issues raised regarding the maintenance of the building has been met. This has included the refurbishment of the kitchen, decoration of some communal areas, and children and young people's bedrooms are more personalised. Children and young people have been fully involved in this process and have chosen wallpaper for the dining room and picked out colour schemes, posters, pictures and soft furnishings for their bedrooms in accordance with their preferences. This means that young people live in a warm, welcoming and homely environment that meets their needs. The large rear garden is maintained and this provides a comfortable area for relaxation, safe play activities and space to grow fruit and vegetables.

The home has a maintenance plan in place, although, some areas for improvement are raised through this inspection including, some paintwork in a bedroom, repairs to door frames and a downstairs toilet. These are mostly due to general wear and tear and the needs of the children and young people. This does not detract from the caring environment that the service strives to create.

A representative on behalf of the organisation undertakes regular monthly visits to look at the overall effectiveness of the home and copies of reports of these visits are completed and regularly sent to Ofsted. The Registered Manager also regularly monitors the home's records and sends a review of the service to Ofsted twice yearly. This process identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the service, along with the improvements that this home has made. These have included further joint working across the organisation such as with speech and language therapists, to help improve communication with children and young people and their behaviour. Staff training has been more effectively tracked, which means that staff are clear about

their training needs to support the children and young people in their care and their own personal development over the coming year. All of this means that the home has made good progress since the last inspection.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated. (NMS 10.3)

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*.