

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	31/01/2013
Inspector	Maureen Hamer
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	07/11/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The provision is a children's home and short break provision that is run by a local authority. The home is able to accommodate up to 14 children and young people of who have a learning disability, including those who have additional more complex or challenging needs.

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 **inadequate progress**.

At the last inspection in October 2012 the overall effectiveness of the home was judged as adequate. The Registered Manager is managing a significant transition in the home's purpose to only providing long-term care for children with learning and physical disabilities. This is resulting in the need to re-evaluate staff's duties and working hours. The manager is aware that this has impacted on the capacity of the service to fully focus on improvements and development and has led to an inadequate judgement.

At the last inspection a range of requirements and recommendations were set to promote improvement, most have not been fully met. The manager has reviewed and improved the details that are recorded about the use of physical restraints; debriefs are now being offered but the duration of the restraint is not always recorded. There are occasions when a measure of control is used and this is not being accurately recorded; consequently the monitoring of all interventions is not being robustly monitored.

Young people's records are not all up-to-date and are not signed or dated. Electronic door alarms are used on some young people's bedroom doors and audio devices are being used in all young people's bedrooms; care files do not show young people's input about the use of such devices and there is no written parental consent. In addition risk assessments do not contain information to describe how such devices promote young people's welfare.

Young people are not engaged in the regular monitoring of quality of care. The manager has not been completing regular monitoring of the home's records reducing formal opportunities to evaluate the home's quality of care. As a result all of these requirements will continue.

Six recommendations were made at the last inspection; one has been met: a system has been put in place to record the use of incentives and sanctions; this helps to monitor their use and effectiveness. The views of young people are being gained to inform their six monthly statutory reviews. There is also some improvement in documenting their views in the running of the home such as menu planning. However the use of total communication aids when communicating with young people who require this support continues to be an area requiring greater consistency, as currently it is not clearly evidenced in young people's plans.

Young people appear relaxed in the care of a mostly long standing staff group. The general environment is homely and staff notices had been removed. Bedrooms were personalised making for a homely environment. However kitchen doors were locked to stop young people being able to access items in the kitchen such as food. This contributes to an institutionalised environment and hinders opportunities to promote young people's independence. The children's guide has not been updated.

The manager and staff group is planning a review of care plans. There is also evidence of working with local health partners to improve young people's behaviour plans. Some suggestions for improvements have begun to be put in place. However this work is still mainly in the planning stages with limited improvements in current documentation. Risk assessments and behaviour plans do not include comprehensive personalised and positive support strategies and are not up-to-date. The lack of written plans impacts on staff's ability to provide a consistent approach and on the ability of managers to monitor the effectiveness of actions.

Staff rotas do not have handover time. Staff do use the home's communication book and staff do complete detailed daily logs that includes young people's progress against their targets. This is successful at helping staff to provide consistent care to young people. However there are occasions when for example due to use of agency staff the needs of young people are not well known. As a result effective activity planning is not in place for example in regard to planning activities.

The home has received a serious complaint but this has not been notified by the home to Ofsted this hinders scrutiny of the quality of care provide to 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
4 (2001)	compile in relation to the children's home a written statement (the Statement of Purpose) as to the matters listed in schedule 1 (Regulation 4(1))	29/03/2013
11 (2001)	ensure that the home makes provision for the care, education, supervision and, of children accommodated there in particular ensure accurate and updated risk and behaviour assessments are available and inform the management of complex behaviour (Regulation 11(1)(a and b))	29/03/2013
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a record is made in a volume kept for the purpose of which shall include the duration of the measure of restraint (Regulation 17B (4)(a))	29/03/2013
22 (2001)	review the use of electronic and mechanical devices used for the surveillance of children that they are not used in a children's home except for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned (Regulation 22 (a)(b)(c)(d))	29/03/2013
28 (2001)	maintain for each child who is accommodated in a children's home a record in permanent form the information, documentation and records specified in Schedule 3 relating to that child: is kept up-to-date and signed and dated by the author of each written entry (Regulation 28 (1)(a,b,c))	29/03/2013
30 (2001)	ensure that if any event listed in column 1 of the table in schedule 5 takes place the registered person shall, without delay, notify the persons indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table (Regulation 30(2))	29/03/2013
33 (2001)	interview with consent and in private, such of the children accommodated there, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as appears necessary in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home (Regulation 33 (4)(a))	29/03/2013
34 (2001)	establish and maintain a system for monitoring matters set out in Schedule 6 at appropriate intervals and improving the quality of care provided to children in the home. (Regulation 34 (1)(a and b))	29/03/2013

Recommendations

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

- enable children to communicate their views on all aspects of their care and support (NMS 1.3)
- make the home a comfortable and homely environment that is well maintained and decorated. Risk reduction should not lead to an institutional feel (NMS 10.2)
- include in the children's guide how a child and parents can contact their IRO, the Children's Rights Director and Ofsted if they wish to raise a concern with inspectors, and how to secure access to an independent advocate (NMS 13.5)
- ensure that children pursue interests and hobbies. This includes taking part in a range of activities, including leisure activities and trips (NMS 7.2)
- review the results of all statutory reviews and reviews if Placement Plans are recorded on the child's file, and individuals responsible for pursuing actions at the home arising from reviews are clearly identified (NMS 25.8)
- ensure the child's placement and behaviour strategy plan sets out any specific strategies that have been agreed to reduce the incidences of any negative behaviour exhibited by the child. (Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 5 Children's Homes paragraph 2.88.)

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*.