

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	21/02/2013
Inspector	Barbara Davies
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	15/10/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is registered to care for five children with learning difficulties and associated disabilities. The home is run by a private company and can offer the flexibility of short breaks in addition to long-term placements.

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**.

The last full inspection of the home was in October 2012 when the overall effectiveness was judged to be outstanding. Following that inspection no requirements for improvements were imposed and the home has addressed the four recommendations that were made. Children, their parents and carers are better informed of their rights and of how to access the Children's Rights Director as this information has now been included in the home's information booklet for children. They are also better informed about how they can make complaints as the home's complaints procedure has been amended to provide an accurate reflection of practice in the home.

The home's development plan has been implemented with some identified timescales having been accelerated, such as, the purchase of a vehicle. This demonstrates a commitment to continual improvement which impact positively on the quality of care provided and improves outcomes for children. No new appointments of staff have been made so it is not possible to test whether they now complete the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction standards. However, the responsible individual demonstrates a thorough knowledge of these alongside a commitment to

ensuring that any new staff is to commence these within seven days of starting employment.

In addition to addressing the recommendations, the home has made further improvements to the service and outcomes for young people have improved. The service has very recently opened a care home for younger adults. This enables children to make a well-planned transition into a service they know when they reach the age of 18 years. One such move has already successfully taken place. Outcomes have improved greatly as a result of the transition as there is increased contact with the family.

The home continues to work extremely successfully and cooperatively with families and carers. An inclusive ethos is promoted. Families and carers are welcomed into the home and special events are planned to include siblings. For instance, the home hosted a Christmas party for all the children who attend the service and for their siblings, with each child receiving a present from Father Christmas. Families respond to the positive regard shown to them and are regular visitors to the home. As a result, young people maintain frequent and positive contact with their families, through which they develop a sense of strong sense of identity and belonging.

The responsible individual and Registered Manager promote the rights of young people and are proactive in addressing any perceived inequality or unfairness. By challenging a school's practice, young people are now able to attend out-of-school activities, such as, the youth club and trampoline club. As a result there are more opportunities for them to socialise with their peers and to develop new skills.

Young people acquire new skills and become more independent through continual re-assessment of their abilities. For instance, one young person now has a locked cupboard in the kitchen in which he keeps his own snacks and for which he retains a magnetic lock and a lock is to be fitted to his bedroom door. Other young people are becoming more independent in feeding themselves and eating in a group setting.

Quality assurance audits of practice are completed thoroughly by the Registered Manager and responsible individual. However, reports of these do not routinely incorporate the views of parents, children or placing officers. This shortfall is however compensated for by the regular feedback that is sought through the regular distribution of questionnaires. Questionnaire feedback from parents shows high levels of satisfaction from parents, carers and young people. The home is responsive to suggestions for improvements and incorporates these into practice, such as the introduction of communication books instead of a communication letter. This enables better tracking of progress.

The training needs of staff are being well met and progressed with all staff having completed or being in the process of completing a qualification appropriate to their role. A further two staff have started the level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's Services England and Children and Young People's Residential Services.

Improvements are being made to the décor and furnishings of the premises and the home's development plan shows further planned improvements. The home provides a safe environment for children and behaviour is extremely well managed. There is consistently no use of physical restraint and only one very minor sanction has been issued since the last inspection. Relationships between staff and children are warm and nurturing.

As a result of the developments in the home's practice and improved outcomes for young people, this inspection has judged the home to have made good progress.

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*.