

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC042446
Inspection date	14/02/2013
Inspector	David Coulter
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	06/11/2012
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2013

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

The service offers short breaks for up to 12 children and young people with severe learning difficulties that may include physical disabilities and additional health problems. It is run by a registered charity which provides support and information services to children, young people and their carers throughout the area. The service is available to children and young people, of both sexes, aged between two years and 17 years. The unit consists of two residential areas, one of which is registered with the Care Quality Commission.

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 **satisfactory progress**.

At the last inspection the overall effectiveness of the home was judged as being good; however, two recommendations were made in order to further improve the quality of the provision and ensure compliance with regulations and standards. It was recommended staff introduce a system that demonstrates the progress and development each young person makes during their visits. Staff have responded positively and are developing a system based on learning objectives. It is envisaged that the varied and stimulating social activities young people experience during their respite stays will make a significant contribution to their attainment of existing developmental goals. A second recommendation was made to monitor the effectiveness of the staff learning and development programme. The staff training programme is continually being reviewed to ensure that staff have the necessary

knowledge and skills to meet the needs of the young people accessing the home.

It is evident that many of the young people now being referred to the home require specialist care. Staff are now caring for a significant number of physically disabled young people with complex health needs as well as an increasing number of physically active young people with autism. Such changes have presented staff with a range of new challenges. For example, staff are now having to keep abreast of developments in medical care and acquire skills that allow them to undertake health tasks such as peg feeding. Systems for both storing and dispensing medication have had to be reviewed in light of the large volume of medication now being dispensed. A number of young people who regularly visit the home can, due to their autism, display challenging behaviour. Staff have responded by developing behaviour management plans to keep both them and other young people safe.

The management team have recognised that the home will need to develop new policies and working practices to meet the increasingly complex care needs of the young people being referred. An experienced manager has been appointed to further develop care practice especially in regard to young people with autism and social and emotional difficulties. The home is also creating a new post for a qualified nurse with the intention of ensuring that health care practices are developed to a high standard.

Careful planning is being used to ensure that the composition of each resident group is manageable and staffed appropriately. Members of the current staff team are fully involved in the homes development and focus groups have been created to review existing policies and practices and identify improvements. For example, one group is currently reviewing the way accidents and incidents are reported with the intention of creating a simpler more robust system. There is a culture of training and professional development within the home and staff have responded to changing needs by accessing training in areas such as autism and managing challenging behaviour.

Care staff liaise effectively with schools and young people now benefit from a more consistent approach to communication and behaviour management. Staff continue to explore more effective forms of communication with young people who experience speech difficulties. A number of young people are now using computer tablets to convey their views to staff.

Evidence indicates the well-motivated staff team continue to provide a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment in which young people with complex care needs can grow and develop. No requirements or recommendations were identified during the inspection.

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*.