

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	11/03/2013
Inspector	Pete Hylton
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	24/07/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This local authority owned home provides care for up to seven children. The home can accommodate children with moderate to severe learning 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**.

This home was judged to be outstanding at the last inspection in July 2012. Two recommendations relating to the young person's guide and the recording of young people's views were made.

The young people's guide now includes the contact details for Ofsted and the Children's Rights Director. This further improves the safety of young people as they are now aware of how to contact these services should they have worries or concerns. The views of young people are now more actively sought and recorded following incidents of restraint or the use of sanctions. This ensures that young people are encouraged to share their feelings after incidents in the home. This has been further enhanced through the use of a 'symbols board' that enables young people including those with communication difficulties, to express their views and opinions.

The Registered Manager has ensured that the home continues to make improvements. Areas of the home have been further improved since the last inspection. The dining room is now decorated in bright and homely colours. This ensures that young people are able to sit and eat meals together in a relaxing and

fun environment. An area of the home has been made into a 'movie room' at the request of the young people. Additional communication aids are in place within the home; an interactive whiteboard has been purchased and wireless internet has been installed. This supports young people in using their communication devices from school and provides a greater level of consistency. Bathrooms have been completely refurbished and are now specifically adapted to meet the needs of young people. The use of bright, attractive tiling and colourful décor ensures that young people are able to complete their personal care in an appropriate and welcoming environment.

A highly proactive staff team source opportunities for further improving the home. For example, a recent successful grant application resulted in specialist sensory equipment being purchased for young people in the home. This was further enhanced through young people being actively involved in the home's application and choosing the items for purchase. As a result, young people feel involved and valued in the running of the home. This is further underpinned by regular young people meetings and individual key worker sessions. This enables all young people the opportunity to express their views and choices. Young people are happy at the home and say that they feel safe.

Staff training has improved since the last inspection. For example, themed safeguarding training specific to young people with disabilities is now being delivered to the staff team. This is in addition to the robust and regularly reviewed mandatory staff training. All staff are up to date with child protection, health and safety, restraint and fire safety training. As a result, the safety of young people is promoted at all times. The staff team are largely unchanged since the last inspection and young people benefit from a settled, consistent and stable staff team. Young people form lasting and appropriate attachments with staff and this further contributes to the emotional security of young people. Where new staff have joined the home, appropriate recruitment procedures ensure all required checks are in place prior to employment starting. This ensures that young people are protected from adults who may pose a risk to their safety.

Young people continue to make significant progress as a result of staying at the home. They are safe, well looked after and encouraged to develop their skills and experiences. Excellent communication between the home, parents and placing authorities ensures that the progress of young people is shared and celebrated. Where concerns do arise, they are swiftly and appropriately resolved. Serious incidents are appropriately managed and referrals to specialist services are made wherever necessary. There have been no serious incidents, safeguarding concerns or episodes of missing since the last inspection. Complaints from young people are rare and where they do occur, are managed appropriately.

The Registered Manager is experienced, knowledgeable and committed to further improving the home. This is reflected in a highly motivated staff team who are similarly committed to improving the standard of care. The home is regularly audited by the organisation and reports from these visits drive further improvements. The Registered Manager's own quality checking is robust and ensures that the home is well monitored and quality assured. Further improvements are planned in the home.

For example, the Registered Manager is currently developing a plan for an art room in the home. Regular meetings with senior managers in the organisation ensure that resources are identified for regular holidays, activities and developments within the home.

Young people benefit from a staff team that place great emphasis on meeting individual need. A member of staff commented, 'we ensure that young people's needs are at the forefront of our practice.' This is reflected in the highly individualised and bespoke care given to young people. This results in young people making progress in all areas of their lives. In some cases the progress has been exceptional. Where young people have experienced turbulence in their educational and family settings, they are now settled and making excellent progress. Young people are supported in maintaining contact with their family and friends. Excellent relationships between staff, parents and carers ensure that young people receive consistent care at all times. Young people are supported in preparing for their next placement and make excellent transitions.

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*.