

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	17/03/2014
Inspector	Bill Drumm
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	19/11/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's resource unit is operated by a local authority. It provides short breaks for up to nine children with learning disabilities and complex health care needs and for children who have autism. The service is provided from two sites.

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**.

At the last inspection in November 2013 the overall effectiveness rating of the home was good. The home has made good progress since the last inspection. Young people remain well cared for and safe. The home also has a new Registered Manager in post.

Two requirements and three recommendations were made at the last inspection. All the requirements and two of the recommendations have been met. One recommendation has not been met. The requirements were to ensure that full and satisfactory information is available within the home in relation to all staff in respect of each of the matters specified in Schedule 2 and to ensure that external monitoring of the home is consistently completed across both buildings in the resource centre. This includes interviews with 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.

The home's manager has carried out a detailed audit of all staff personnel records retained at the home. Where gaps in employment history have been highlighted or

where verbal checks of written references have not been carried out the home's manager has taken decisive action to rectify this. Staff personnel records now contain detailed information about each staff member's employment history and all written references have been checked for their authenticity. This helps to keep young people safe and free from exploitation.

The home's manager has also reviewed the procedure for carrying out independent monitoring visits of the home. The visiting officer now visits both properties that make up this registration and speaks directly with young people, their parents or relatives and staff working at the home. The independent visitor was spoken to as part of this inspection and said, 'It's amazing all the positive things staff say about working here and this is echoed by the parents of the young people. There's vibrancy about the place. Everyone I've spoken to enjoys what they do and the young people are really progressing well.' Independent monitoring of the home ensures that the quality of care is regularly monitored and that young people receive a good quality service.

One recommendation was to ensure that all staff and young people are given the opportunity to discuss, with an appropriate person, any incidents of restraint they have been involved in, witnessed or been affected by. The home's manager has discussed the use of restraint with staff in staff meetings and individual supervision sessions. Staff have been encouraged to adopt a more restorative approach to behaviour management. As a result no restraints or holds have taken place since the last inspection. This means young people are more able to understand the consequences of their actions and are able to develop acceptable behaviour without having to be held or restrained.

The second recommendation was to monitor all records kept by the home to ensure compliance with the home's policies and to take immediate action to address any issues raised. The home's manager has introduced a robust process for monitoring all records within the home. Tasks have been allocated to deputies and senior staff and checks are carried out on a weekly, monthly and quarterly basis. The home's manager oversees the outcomes of this monitoring and takes full responsibility for their accuracy. This means that the monitoring process within the home is thorough and that any shortfalls are quickly identified and appropriate action taken.

The recommendation that has not been met is about information relating to each child, specifically the home's admission and discharge register. The legal status under which young people may be accommodated is not recorded. This means that the information contained within the register does not provide an accurate record and does not contribute to a sufficient understanding of the young person's life.

The home has made further progress in a number of other areas. Staff have worked hard to involve as many young people as possible in learning self-help and daily living skills. Young people have been supported to go shopping for food items and to cook their own meals. This helps to promote their self-confidence and self-esteem. Young people have also been involved in a community survey looking at accessibility issues for disabled people in the local area. This helps young people to feel listened

to and to feel valued. Young people have also been encouraged to attend a local youth club. This allows them to meet young people of a similar age group who do not have disabilities and make friends.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure all information relating to a child is recorded clearly and in a way which will be helpful to the child when they access their files now or in the future. (NMS 22.5)

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*.