

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC361167
<b>Inspector</b>	Michelle Spruce/Louise Whittle
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Interim
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

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<b>Registered person</b>	New Options (3) Ltd.
<b>Registered person address</b>	Turnpike Gate House Alcester Heath Alcester Warwickshire B49 5JG
<b>Responsible individual</b>	Graham Baker
<b>Registered manager</b>	Rachael Claire Sharpe
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	30/07/2014

<b>Inspection date</b>	10/03/2015
Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

## This inspection

This home was judged adequate at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

Since the last full inspection in July 2014 the manager has addressed the five requirements and two recommendations that were made. The Statement of Purpose has been amended and now includes details of the experience and qualifications of staff working at the home, including health care and therapeutic staff. Health care professionals now receive clinical supervision, and agency staff are also supervised. This has improved personal development and working relationships.

Changes to the environment have been made to improve the acoustics and minimise the noise levels. Sound absorbing panels have been fitted to ceilings and walls. This has helped to absorb sound levels and reduce them to a more acceptable level that young people can tolerate. As a result, young people interact more.

The independent visitor now consults with others about the well-being and safety of young people. Visits to the home are undertaken monthly and also include visits during the weekend.

Action has been taken to improve the monitoring of the matters set out in Schedule 6. Reports are now more detailed. They now track and monitor progress. The views of parents, social workers and placing authorities are incorporated into the review of the quality of care.

All maintenance issues are now repaired quickly because the manager has introduced a new reporting system. This keeps the environment safe and reduces the risk of accident and injury.

The service continues to make a positive contribution to the lives of young people with autism and complex needs. Warm, caring and committed staff understand and

respond to young people's needs. Young people have good relationships with staff. They communicate their wishes and feelings in a variety of ways, including body language, signs and symbols.

Staff listen to young people's views and actively support them to attend 'The Voice Project' meetings, which are held in the community monthly. These meetings encourage young people to develop their social and communication skills and to talk about the services that they receive. This means their opinions are valued.

Young people continue to benefit from social interaction in and out of the home. For example, they relax by listening to music, watching DVD's or spend time in their rooms or in the garden. During off-site activities they have experienced swimming, Laser-Quest and bowling. This improves their social opportunities. Certificates of achievement along with photographs of the young people demonstrate how they enjoy leisure activities. For example, one young person has a certificate for attending Scouts.

Young people's health needs are met because clear plans are in place to identify the support required to meet their complex needs. Daily menus are now provided to young people before meal times. This helps them to make informed choices and to pick alternatives. This ensures their dietary and cultural needs are met.

Young people are included in their transition planning. Since the last inspection some young people have moved on successfully as part of their plan. Young people new to the home have also benefitted from well-organised placement planning. This has helped them to settle into their new environment with minimal disruption or distress.

Staff are innovative in enabling young people to interact and take part in developing life skills. For example, staff have assisted one young person to learn self-care skills by leaving messages on his wall to clean his teeth from his favourite fictional character. This improves his health and empowers him to take personal responsibility.

Young people live in a safe environment where trained staff manage their risks well. This protects young people from harm. Staff are trained in the use of physical intervention and behaviour management. This enables staff to keep young people safe in challenging situations. One staff member described using minimal physical intervention during a trip to the swimming pool when a young person became distressed. This was a complex environment, but the young person was safe throughout.

Staff work well with the professional and clinical multi-disciplinary team. Close joint working and effective communication helps to share crucial information required to support the emotional, physical, and psychological needs of young people. Behaviour support plans produced by the multi-disciplinary team, include details of

appropriate physical intervention taking into account the young person's health needs. This protects them from harm and keeps them safe.

Staff and young people undertake regular fire evacuation practices. This ensures they know how to respond in the event of a fire. The buildings are well maintained and appropriately furnished. Staff provide high levels of supervision at all times. One young person now wears a head protector after he sustained an injury during a seizure. A staff member expressed satisfaction that he does not try to remove the protection, which prevents further injury. Noise levels throughout the home have reduced due to the installation of sound absorbing panels. This is a significant improvement for the young people who are distressed by loud sounds. This reduces the risk of young people becoming distressed and potentially harming themselves or others.

The manager has safely recruited staff since the last inspection. This keeps young people safe. Complaints and allegations are managed well. Allegations of abuse are referred to the Local Children's Safeguarding Board and investigations are initiated promptly. This protects young people from harm.

## Information about this children's home

This setting is an independent residential special school registered as a children's home, operated by a private company. The school offers specialised education and care for up to 22 children with learning disabilities, including two children under short-break arrangements. The school has a specialism with children who are diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder and associated complex needs. Some young people stay until they have completed their education at 19. There are currently six children living at the home and two who use the service for short breaks. Six young adults live in the children's home.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/07/2014	Full	adequate
12/02/2014	Interim	inadequate progress
04/12/2013	Full	adequate
11/09/2013	Full	inadequate

## **What inspection judgements mean**

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

## **Information 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 main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.