

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC020558
Inspection date	14/02/2013
Inspector	Elizabeth Barrett
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Date of last inspection	22/06/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The privately owned school is registered as a children's home to accommodate 22 children and young people. The school provides education and care to children and young people who present with severe learning disabilities, challenging behaviours, autistic spectrum disorder and sensory impairment.

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 June 2012 the overall quality rating of the service was judged as good, with one requirement and one recommendation made to improve the provision. This service demonstrates its capacity to improve because it has met the requirement and recommendation from the previous visit, and is judged to be making good progress following this inspection.

Young people make good progress living in this school. Young people thrive because they are treated as individuals. Progress is made in reducing challenging behaviour, improving educational achievement, and developing communication and social skills. For example, young people have participated in an outdoor adventure holiday, which has enabled them to take personal risks by completing a variety of challenging physical and social pursuits. Feedback from parents include, 'I am overwhelmed by the positive outcomes achieved by my child.' Consequently, young people are supported to channel their individual personalities, learn new skills and maximise their potential. Observations at this visit show interaction between staff and young people as person centred and nurturing, with young people communicating

enthusiastically with staff, and sharing appropriate physical contact and activities.

Since the last inspection the school has introduced a new system for managing and recording staff supervision. A timetable of supervisions is in place that includes the date, time, and type of supervision scheduled and is cross-referenced with individual staff records. There has been a significant investment in staff training such as autism training for teaching and care staff and behavioural management training for auxiliary workers. Workshops are taking place in relation to exploring friendships, sexuality and relationships for young people with learning disabilities. Information from these sessions is being used to inform the development of a policy and procedure to improve equality and diversity practice. This means all staff are supported to understand the specific needs of young people and to deliver positive care and transitions across the school.

Improvements have been made to young people's care planning frameworks that include the implementation of personalised care and education plans, and communication passports. A speech and language therapist works alongside all school staff, to ensure young people's communication preferences are identified, and met. The school is providing I Pads for young people, which encourages them to express their views and feelings and celebrate achievements. As a result young people receive a high standard of care and education, because they are more involved in making choices and decisions in relation to their needs.

The school has a comprehensive set of individualised risk assessments and behaviour management plans for young people. Behaviour management records reflect how staff have intervened successfully to reduce incidents, and how techniques have been adopted to minimise risk and injury to young people. Episodes of physical restraint have reduced since the last inspection. The head of care said that staff practice is more effective, because all workers are benefiting from development opportunities, which promotes the safe care of young people.

Staff practice is underpinned by robust safeguarding policies and child protection training. Investigations into allegations and complaints are responded to appropriately. The registered person liaises with the Local Authority Designated Officer when necessary and acts in accordance with organisational and local safeguarding procedures. All significant events are notified to the regulatory body, with records stored securely. However, not all records provide sufficient detail of the action taken. Communication of events is mostly effective, although some information has not been shared in a timely manner. Discussion with parents and professionals comment that there has been no impact on young people's safety because of these shortfalls, and that issues are promptly addressed by the school. However, a requirement is made to ensure the school notifies events without delay and that records provide clear information on the action taken. Parents spoken with at this visit confirm that communication with the school is excellent and the quality of care their child receives is outstanding.

Internal and external monitoring and quality assurance checks are routinely made with reports provided. However, Regulation 33 visits are not undertaken on an

unannounced basis, and some reports do not provide clear and sufficient detail of the impact of any shortfalls, on the day to day running of the school. A recommendation is made to consider some visits taking place unannounced, and to ensure reports identify how issues can affect practice, to enable the registered person to address concerns appropriately.

Significant investment has been made to all areas of the school since the last inspection. Living environments have benefitted from redecoration and refurbishment. The grounds are in the process of being remodelled to include additional items of outdoor play equipment and plans are in place to build a music room. Parents are actively involved in providing homely and personalised touches and are regularly consulted in relation to the day-to-day care arrangements in the school.

Areas for improvement

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
30 (2001)	ensure if in relation to a children's home, any of the events listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 5 takes place, the registered person shall without delay notify the persons indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table and provide sufficient detail of the action taken. (Regulation 30 (1))	30/04/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure that some of visits of the home carried out under Regulation 33 are unannounced and include relevant checks set out in regulations and in particular that written reports identify issues or concerns and the impact of these concerns on the practice of the home. (NMS 21.7)

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*.