

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	30/04/2013
Inspector	Leonard Hird
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	09/10/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This privately run children's home is registered to care for up to four young people, whose primary needs arise from emotional or behavioural difficulties.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: a service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

Good: a service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements

Adequate: a service that only meets minimum requirements

Inadequate: a service that does not meet minimum requirements

Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is judged to be **adequate**.

Members of staff are providing a caring, safe and stable environment for young people to live in. Young people feel safe living at the home and the staff team give them appropriate advice and support to help keep them safe. Young people commented that they felt safe and well cared for at the home. The qualified staff team are helping young people to try and lead healthy and active lifestyles while at the same time supporting them in preparing for independence.

Young people are encouraged to keep in touch with family and friends where appropriate. The home is only adequately decorated and furnished but is meeting the needs of young people.

The home is adequately led and managed. Requirements and recommendations made at last inspection have been addressed. However, there are shortfalls within the monitoring of restraint records, staff training, professional supervision, quality assurance monitoring and the physical environment of the home. These shortfalls are having an impact on the quality of care young people receive at the home.

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
27 (2001)	ensure that all persons employed within the home receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal (Reg 27)	28/06/2013
17A (2001)	ensure that a written record is made within 24 hours of any measure of control, restraint or discipline used at the home, which includes all required information (Regulation 17A(3)(h))	31/05/2013
33 (2001)	ensure that the registered provider shall supply a copy of the report required to be made to HMCI. (Regulation 33) (4)(c) (a)	31/05/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated (NMS 10.3)
- ensure the care and support provided to children minimises the risk that they will go missing and reduces the risk of harm should the child go missing; specifically ensure that statutory guidance and children who run away and go missing from home or care is implemented, and evidence is implemented. (NMS 5.1)

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **adequate**.

The outcomes achieved by young people living at the home are adequate. Young people have positive working relationships with their key workers and other staff. Each young person has an individual care plan that is taking account of their health, education, preparation for independence and social care needs. Individual key workers and young people meet regularly to make sure that care plans and individual risk assessments are reflective of the young person's needs. However, it is essential that risk assessments are more detailed in content particularly in the management of risk reduction in areas such as, self-harming behaviour or substance misuse. Care plans and risk assessments are generally meeting the needs of the young people.

Each young person has a personal education plan that sets out their educational needs and how these are to be met. Members of staff ensure that the individual achievements of each young person living at the home are documented and celebrated. The staff team work in collaboration with the young people's educational

placements and are encouraging young people to maintain or improve their attendance and persevere with their studies. Young people's attendance at school and college is variable. The lack of consistent levels of attendance at school and college is contributing to an under achievement in their academic careers.

Young people have a suitable choice of healthy and nutritious meals. The home's menu accommodates the individual dietary requirements of the young people. Young people are encouraged to help purchase ingredients and prepare their own meals in preparation for independence. The young people confirm they enjoy the meals prepared at the home.

Young people have their own personal health plans in place and these are monitored by the home's staff and the company's regulation 33 visitor. Parental consents are in place for the administration of emergency first aid and the administration of medication. Members of staff receive basic training in first aid, food hygiene, the safe handling and administration of medication. However, staff have yet to receive any training in more specialist areas such as, the addressing of substance misuse. Records are maintained showing visits to local doctors and other health specialists are occurring. Social care professionals confirm that young people living at the home have access to the appropriate health care services. Young people confirm that the staff team look after them if they are ever unwell.

Quality of care

The quality of the care is **adequate**.

Adequate levels of care and support are being provided by the home for the young people. Admissions to the home are on a planned basis and follow the home's admission policy and procedure. All of the young people have their own individual care and risk assessment plans in place. These plans are reviewed on a regular basis by the key worker and other members of staff along with the home's independent regulation 33 visitor. Some young people's risk assessments lack clarity as to how risks, such as substance misuse, sexualised behaviour or incidents of self-harming are being managed.

All of the staff team have a good knowledge of each young person's needs. There is evidence of positive professional and caring interactions occurring between young people and staff. A social care professional indicated that the young person they were working with was very positive about staff and had formed good relationships with them and they also stated 'members of staff make good effort to attend personal educational planning meetings and looked after children reviews.' All of the young people were observed to be able to approach any member of staff for support. Young people are offered a number of opportunities such as, key worker sessions or review meetings, to be involved in identifying what kind of support they require. This enables young people to feel valued and listened to.

Young people have their own bedroom and there are adequate bathroom facilities. The home has improved some of the communal living areas but there is a need to

ensure that all of the bedrooms and the kitchen area are maintained, furnished, cleaned and decorated to the same high standard. There is a commitment by staff and young people to maintaining a homely environment by treating the home's facilities with respect. The home is adequately furnished and decorated and meets the needs of the young people who live there.

Young people are encouraged to enjoy a healthy diet and eat well. The home's menu takes account of the individual dietary needs of the young people. Young people are supported by staff to choose, purchase, prepare and cook food as part of learning some of the life skills required for independent living. The young people said that in the main they enjoyed the food and meals prepared at the home.

Safeguarding children and young people

The service is **adequate** at keeping children and young people safe and feeling safe.

The home has adequate safeguarding arrangements in place to protect and keep young people safe.

All staff receive training in child protection, as well as in addressing challenging behaviour and countering bullying behaviour. Members of staff are aware of the need for vigilance in these most important areas of care and can access policies and procedures on safeguarding which they easily understand. Currently not all members of staff have received up-to-date training in physical restraint. Physical restraint is rarely used in the home. However, when records have been used, they have not always been completed within the required 24-hour period. This lack of prompt recording could lead to the use of physical restraint involving a young person, not being accurately reported or recorded.

Young people indicate they are able to speak to members of staff for advice if they feel unhappy or have a problem. All complaints are taken seriously by the home and are recorded and investigated. Young people are aware of the complaints policy and feel that they can use it if necessary.

The manager and staff team work to ensure that the home provides a safe and comfortable environment for the young people who live there. Regular health and safety checks are completed to help minimise any risks to young people.

There are effective procedures in place to look for young people who go missing. Young people can record the reasons why they went missing but there is a need for them to be interviewed by someone independent of the home on their return.

The home has a range of sanctions and incentives in place with which the staff team can use to support and develop positive behaviour in young people. Young people confirm that they feel safe living at the home and that they have sound professional relationships with members of staff.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the children's home are **adequate**.

The arrangements in place to manage, monitor and lead the home are adequate.

The young person's guide and the home's Statement of Purpose detail how the home is managed and run. The information in these documents is presented in a way that can be understood by young people, their families and partner agencies. The Registered Manager assisted by the staff team is ensuring that the home is organised, managed and run in line with the Statement of Purpose.

There are a number of quality assurance systems in place at the home, including monthly unannounced regulation 33 monitoring visits by the company's representative. Where actions have been made such as completing restraint documentation not all of these have been promptly acted upon by the manager or the company. The regulation 33 visitor's reports are not being forwarded to Ofsted within the required timescale thereby making it difficult for the regulator to monitor the quality of care being provided.

The staff team working at the home is well experienced and all either have appropriate qualifications for working with young people or are in the process of attaining them. The manager arranges regular core training in areas such as child protection, physical intervention or equality and diversity. However, staff have not received appropriate levels of training in areas such as addressing self-harming behaviour which would further enhance their skills to look after young people who exhibits these behaviours.

The manager is ensuring that full time members of staff receive professional supervision and annual appraisal at the appropriate time intervals. However, there is a need to ensure that part-time care staff, including the home's responsible individual receive professional supervision commensurate to their needs. Professional supervision has improved for the Registered Manager since the last inspection but it needs to be further developed to ensure the professional development of a manager is not compromised. Members of staff spoken with confirmed that they were receiving training and recorded supervision. Staffing levels are sufficient to meet the current needs of the young people at the home.

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 *Inspections of children's homes – framework for inspection* and the evaluation schedule for the inspection of children's homes.