

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	29/02/2012
Inspector	Stephen Trainor
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Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	29/11/2011
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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 (March 2011)*.

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.

Service information

Brief description of the service

A private organisation operates this children's home. This service is registered for one young person aged between 11 and 17 years of age. The home cares for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Progress

Since their previous inspection the service is judged to be making **good** progress.

At the last full inspection, the home was judged as good. The children's home has demonstrated continued improvement in the quality of care and outcomes for children and young people. Young people benefit from consistent practice that allows their lives to improve. Placements are stable and young people take responsibility for their behaviour. Referrals and introductions are managed carefully and are clearly being matched to staff's skills sets. There is good planning from the start of placements and this helps to secure positive outcomes. This is a good achievement considering most placements are short term. The responsible organisation is working with partners and advocacy services to establish a workable placement plan for one young person who has shown good commitment to his placement. A series of meetings and representations are planned to ensure young people's views are taken into account in all aspects of their care. The present placement arrangements are not supported by a defined timeline and this has a negative impact on everyone's ability to plan for the future.

Records provide a good overview of the work that is taking place at the home. Programmes run by key workers positively change young people's behaviours. Progress and achievements continue to be made in all aspects of their lives. Ongoing efforts are being made to capture the views of partners supporting placements. More written views and comments are needed to highlight the present levels of satisfaction regarding the home's operation, management, young people's welfare and the response taken to health and safety.

There is good use of a range of monitoring activities and evaluation of data improves the quality of care. Planning is founded on evidence that tackles key areas of weakness and builds on areas of strength. The home's aims and objectives are being fulfilled and the responsible organisation is planning to highlight successes, improvements and future planned developments within the next Regulation 34 report being drafted for the end of the present inspection year. The home maintains a development plan. Internal quality assurance checks also support continuous improvements.

Young people work closely with staff and hard work has created an interesting home where young people like to be. The young people's views are consistently gathered

and these influence the home's operation and future direction. There is an excellent ethos at the home that helps young people to achieve and develop. Relationships are good with individual differences being accepted and valued by all living and working at the home. Individuals prosper and they confirm that they are happy, safe and relaxed living in their home. Young people confirm that any complaints they have are responded to in full. One matter was under investigation.

Managers stimulate the enthusiasm of staff and channel their efforts effectively. There are very few behaviour management or safeguarding concerns. Young people receive a good standard of care from a small but experienced staff team. Staffing levels are maintained in accordance with risk assessments. It is a child-focused service that is conducive to young people developing their potential. There is suitable leadership and management oversight provided by the Registered Manager and a capable deputy. Good information, including policy and procedural guidance, is available to support staff's practice. Staff meetings are being used to ensure all levels of staff fully comprehend the new inspection framework.

The promotion of young people's health and well-being is good. Young people are aware of their health arrangements and are fully satisfied with the support they receive. Proactive practice was demonstrated in ensuring health histories are up to date and a gap in some immunisation details was closed. There is access to specialist mental health assessments and support when required.

Young people's educational attainments are good. Young people actively engage with their education and attendance is excellent. A high level of interest was shown by young people in gaining meaningful qualifications. This was very encouraging since the young people had experienced inconsistent education in the past. Young people's achievements improve self-confidence and future prospects. Young people regularly reflect on their progress with staff and this keeps them motivated.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure children accommodated at the home understand and agree with the purpose and contents of their placement plan and the reasoning behind any decisions about their care; specifically, that agreement is reached by the placing authority on the timescale for the placement to last so that young people can plan their futures (NMS 25.1)
- improve the evidence that shows the views, wishes and feelings of partners and those significant to children including independent reviewing officers is taken into account when monitoring staff and developing the home. (NMS 1.7)