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Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC006921
Inspection date	17/01/2013
Inspector	Wendy Anderson
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	24/08/2012

Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is registered to accommodate up to five children or young people. The Statement of Purpose specifies an age range of eight to 17 years. The children or young people may have complex needs including emotional and behavioural difficulties. The provider is an organisation and a limited company, with a number of children's homes.

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 **inadequate progress**.

The overall effectiveness of this service was judged as good at the last full inspection. At that inspection, three requirements and two recommendations were made. Of these, only one recommendation has been fully met. There has been some improvement in the other areas but remain not met overall. The manager has had a period of time off work but her work was not picked up by someone else within the organisation. Alternative management arrangements were not sufficient to ensure that the shortfalls were addressed.

The three requirements which remain outstanding relate to staff supervision, the recording of complaints and the recording of measures of control, restraint and discipline.

Appropriate arrangements for the supervision of staff were not made in the manager's absence. At this inspection, four staff supervision files were inspected which show that supervision remains inconsistent. In the five months since the last inspection, four members of staff have not received monthly supervision sessions as the company's supervision policy states they should. This ranges from one member of staff having received three supervision sessions, a development meeting and an annual appraisal while another member of staff has received one supervision and one development session. One of the files inspected was that of a new member of staff who commenced employment in October 2012. The company's policy states that new staff should be receiving supervision at least every two weeks. This has not happened. Despite this shortfall the staff team provided a reasonable standard of care for young people during the manager's absence.

There has been some improvement in the recording of restraints. However, staff continue to use vague language such as 'threatening' or 'violent'. Also on two occasions an incident sheet had not been completed so the required detail of events was not present. There is also a lack of consistency in recording the effectiveness of the restraint. These matters mean that it is not possible to robustly assess whether the restraints are appropriate and effective.

Since the last inspection there have been seven complaints. Three of these are appropriately recorded. However, one does not state if the complainant is satisfied with the outcome and another one had incomplete records. At the time of inspection two complaints were on-going. Ofsted had received information about one of these complaints. Although the home was aware of it there was no record of the complaint. Again this is indicative of the home's procedures not being robustly adhered to. Although not the case at this inspection, these shortfalls could potentially compromise an investigation into concerns raised.

Of the two recommendations, one is met and the other is not met. Currently there are no young people placed who have restrictions on who they may contact. However, the home now has systems in place to address this previous shortfall.

Since the last inspection there have been five notifications of significant events. Only two of these notifications have been received by Ofsted within the required timescales. This shortfall did not impact on young people as appropriate action had been taken in response to the incidents. However, the delay does not allow the regulator to respond in a timely fashion if there are concerns about the safety and welfare of young people.

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 staff receive appropriate supervision. In particular, this needs to be in line with the organisation’s policy on staff supervision (Regulation 27(4)(a))	31/03/2013
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a record is made in a volume kept for this purpose. In particular, that there is continuity between records of incidents and those for restraints and that all records are complete (Regulation 17B (3))	31/03/2013
24 (2001)	ensure that a written record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response and the outcome of the investigation. In particular, this needs to include whether the complainant is satisfied with the outcome of the investigation or not.(Regulation 24 (5))	31/03/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure a system is in place to notify within 24 hours the persons and appropriate authorities of the occurrences of significant events in accordance with Regulation 30, Schedule 5. (NMS 24.1)

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*.