

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Rachel Ruth Britten
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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

The home provides care and accommodation for up to two young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties. It is part of a large organisation operating a number of children's homes.

Progress

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

The children's home has demonstrated continued improvement in the quality of care and outcomes for young people. This improvement is provided by the small, stable and committed staff and management team. They show continuing professionalism and ability to adapt the provision of good quality care to the individual needs of the young people placed. As a result, young people with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties are making significant progress. This is particularly evident in relation to their education, behaviour, emotional health and family relationships.

The home has addressed the one requirement and all the recommendations raised at the last inspection in June 2011. Managers continue to drive improvements through good quality leadership, robust monitoring and development planning. Action planning focuses on ensuring that records and the home's running are effective. It also ensures that there is prompt maintenance and continuous improvements to the fabric of the house. Young people therefore benefit from a well-run home which provides them with a high standard of comfort and facility. However, consultation with young people, parents and placing authorities is not routinely built into manager monitoring processes. There is also little clear identification of trends, patterns, strengths and weaknesses in the home. This prevents staff and managers from identifying new, relevant ways to drive continuous improvements in what is already a good setting.

Young people benefit from a clean, welcoming home environment and a healthy lifestyle. This was already the case at the last inspection, but standards are further improved with respect to hygiene in the bathroom. There is also more care taken to cross reference any incident and accident records to ensure that both young people and staff have their health protected. This is particularly true for instances when the effects of accidents or injuries are not immediately apparent.

Young people's rights are better served because necessary contact numbers are now more clearly made available to them in the children's guide. The guide now includes contact numbers for the young people's Independent Reviewing Officer and for Ofsted. Young people are confident about the role of the Regulator, Ofsted, and are able to say that they know how to complain. They do not want to complain because they are settled and happy in the home. Young people's rights are also better served

now that staff always ensure that medical support is offered following all restraints, including when there is no obvious need. There have not been any incidents of restraint since the last inspection. This is an indicator of staff success in ensuring that very significant behaviour difficulties have been successfully managed without requiring restraint.

Improvements have been made in some of the information recorded about young people. This means that it is clearer and more helpful to them. Young people are also more engaged in writing and adding to their records. They are encouraged by seeing clearly in written form, just what progress they are making and what they need to do to achieve their placement goals. For example, young people are engaged in reading their 'tracker' documents and adding comments. They also sometimes write their own personal progress sheets and have more involvement in reading their risk assessments, devising their behaviour reward planning and on occasions, writing part of their key working sessions.

Young people are benefitting from staff skill and commitment to a more nurturing approach. This is tailored to the specific needs of the young people presently placed and is proving very effective. Staff and managers have developed this further since the last inspection and are successfully combining it with highly supportive work with young people's parents as part of rehabilitation plans. Their consistent approach and close working with family relationship counsellors, therapists, parents and young people together, is facilitating successful family rehabilitation. Parents compliment the home on the 'understanding care' being provided. Therapeutic professionals and medical personnel have also written compliments about the staff's 'thoughtful approach', effective teamwork and robust, safe care practices.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- extend the effectiveness of monitoring activities to include regular consultation with young people, parents and placing authorities; ensuring that patterns and trends are identified and used to drive continuous improvements in the quality of care. (NMS 21.1 and 21.2)