

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC008270
Inspection date	13/02/2012
Inspector	Rachel Ruth Britten
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	07/09/2011
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The setting is a family-sized home. Care is provided for two young people of either sex who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. A private company owns and operates this setting.

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.

The home has demonstrated continued improvement in the quality of care and outcomes for young people since the last full inspection in September 2011. The two recommendations that were raised at the previous inspection have been met. The manager continues to apply lessons learnt from inspections to all of the homes that she manages. She also endeavours to drive forward ideas for change and improvement to the organisation in general. As a result, continuous improvements can be identified in the systems for consultation with young people and stakeholders; staff training and development; interagency working and safeguarding young people as they move into independence. Scope remains to use the messages from feedback and monitoring effectively in order to identify strengths and weaknesses.

Young people are continuing to do well in education, finding employment and moving towards independent living. For example, they have passed important GCSE examinations and have begun using public transport to travel unaccompanied to contact visits. They have also been able to secure employment, budget solely on Job Seekers Allowance, and have begun a programme of phased overnight stays at their own flat. This is because the staff group remain consistent and committed to

providing a good routine and effective support to each individual young person. Staff changes have been managed in good time and new staff are already familiar with the young people and the setting, so that disruption to young people is minimal. Existing staff continue to provide the high quality care that good parents would do, including effective liaison with teachers, community police, and appropriate specialist counselling services. As a result, young people are helped to succeed and sustain their health and appropriate relationships, routines and lifestyles.

Staff are continuing to develop their skills and abilities. Recent updating safeguarding training has taken place and managers are seeking out appropriate welfare rights and sexual exploitation training to help equip staff further in areas relevant to the young people in placement. Staff are also being supported to extend their professional skills, for example, in providing supervision and assessment for National Vocational Qualification training. Senior staff are also being considered for management training. Morale is high amongst staff, particularly because recently obtained feedback from consultation with young people, social workers, relatives and other stakeholders is very positive. Schools, police and social workers are consistently positive about the effectiveness of liaison from the staff and manager. They confirm that the service young people receive is of good quality and that lessons learnt from individual young people's situations are used to improve policing and safeguarding services to young people in the local area.

The leadership and management of the home remains high quality. The manager has ensured that the overdue appraisal has been completed. The recommendation regarding this is therefore met. The home's and the young person's records of accidents and administration of first aid are now consistently completed. This meets the second recommendation raised at the last inspection. More significantly, the manager has acted on a shortfall in the home's monitoring activities which was raised at a recent inspection of another home she manages. As a result, she has devised thoughtful questionnaires for obtaining regular feedback from young people, relatives, placing authorities and other involved agencies. This has yielded very positive feedback which serves to encourage staff and help sustain morale. However, the manager has not yet used this feedback to contribute to monitoring or development plans. This means that the information provided from consultation is not yet effectively driving continuous improvements.

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)*.