

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC008485
Inspector	Angela Whiteley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered manager	Gary Anthony Holt
Date of last inspection	21/05/2014

Inspection date	22/12/2014
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

Since the last inspection the service has demonstrated continued improvement in the quality of care and outcomes for young people. The four requirements and three recommendations identified at the last inspection have all been addressed. This demonstrates the Registered Manager's commitment to improving the service.

The home has made progress in other areas, which has had positive outcomes for young people. For example, some young people have been supported to make positive transitions to other placements. Others have successfully moved to live with family members. Young people have benefited from improved contact arrangements and better engagement with education. The home has been proactive in ensuring all young people have individual education packages to enable them to continue with their learning. Some young people have excellent attendance at college and have realistic targets, which will help them achieve a place at university.

Young people are encouraged to gain skills for their future independence and actively contribute to the running of the home. They benefit from the work undertaken to improve the appearance of the home. This includes redecoration of bedrooms, the entrance hall, stairs and new furniture and equipment for various parts of the home. Further work is planned to redecorate the young persons' bathroom, the office and downstairs bedroom.

Young people are extremely settled at the home and confirm they feel safe. They have developed strong relationships with a consistent and experienced staff team. Staff are well-qualified to meet the needs of young people in placement. They deliver a strong, child-focused service that helps young people fulfil their aspirations and achieve their potential. Additional staffing is available to provide individual support to young people who are new to the home. This additional support is also available for those who continue to place themselves at risk of harm by leaving the

home without permission. This helps young people settle quickly and has reduced incidents of young people going missing from the home or being involved in incidents of sexual exploitation.

Some young people come to the home having been assessed at high risk of sexual exploitation. Staff work closely with these young people and other professionals to keep them safe. The Registered Manager has undertaken relevant training to ensure he is up-to-date with legislation and practice and has established good partnership working with specialist police services that help to protect vulnerable young people. Young people benefit from regular key working sessions with staff. They use a variety of work sheets and tools to help them understand their behaviours and develop confidence in their ability to protect themselves from harmful situations. Some young people have made good progress and now benefit from unsupervised contact and overnight stays agreed by the placing authority. This helps young people develop positive and safe relationships.

The Registered Manager is proactive in contacting the placing authority when there are any concerns about young people's welfare or they are not receiving the services they need. He works closely with other professionals, such as the police, youth offending service and health professionals, who have an interest in securing positive outcomes for young people. He consults regularly with professionals, parents, relatives and young people about the quality of care provided. Young people speak positively about the care they receive; this is endorsed by other professionals and family members.

Young people are encouraged to access a range of health support services, which promotes their health. For example, substance abuse, sexual health checks and information, and condom distribution that staff are trained to deliver. Some young people attend specialist services provided by the local child and adolescent mental health service, which helps them understand the reasons behind some of their behaviours.

The Registered Manager has generally good monitoring and oversight of the home. The monitoring and quality assurance systems in place help to ensure young people continue to enjoy a high standard of care. However, some of the homes records have not been thoroughly monitored in recent weeks. This specifically relates to staff writing clear records of incidents. In addition, some sanction records do not contain young people's comments and signature. This means they may not fully understand the reasons why these measures are used, which may reduce their effectiveness. The independent visitor inspects the home monthly. These reports provide helpful information and guidance on areas where improvements to the home could be made. However, a recent report has not been sent to Ofsted in line with regulation. This prevents the regulator from undertaking their scrutiny role. Also, reports of visits carried out by the independent visitor are not being kept in the home for the Registered Manager and staff to read and respond to. This means the home may miss opportunities to improve practice further.

The Registered Manager acknowledges his weakness is administrative tasks. He is committed to addressing identified shortfalls promptly. He has improved practice and systems that better captures data and provides young people with sufficient information about their care. For example, completing morning welfare checks on young people, a compact children's guide booklet and single sheet child-friendly behaviour management plans. There are no outstanding requirements or recommendations from previous inspections, which demonstrates the Registered Manager is committed to an improvement agenda.

Information about this children's home

This is a private children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to six young people with physical disabilities and emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/05/2014	Full	good
06/01/2014	Interim	inadequate progress
31/05/2013	Full	good
28/02/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

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
33 (2001)	ensure that the independent person produces a written report about a visit and provides a copy of the report to HMCI. (Regulation 33 (9) (a))	19/01/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure where sanctions, disciplinary measures or restraints are used, children are encouraged to have their views recorded and sign the records kept by the home (NMS 3.18)
- ensure the manager regularly monitors, in line with regulations, all records kept by the home to ensure compliance with the homes policies and that

immediate action is taken to address any issues raised by this monitoring (NMS 21.2)

- ensure the registered provider's written report of a visit carried out under Regulation 33 visits is lodged in the home for the manager and staff to read and respond to. (NMS 21.8)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information 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 framework of inspection for children's homes.