

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Angela Whiteley
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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

This is a private children's home registered to provide care and accommodation for up to eight young people who may be experiencing emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Progress

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

The manager has addressed the two requirements and partially met the five recommendations from the previous inspection. Placing authorities and parents, where appropriate, have signed consent forms for the use of electronic monitoring on bedroom doors ensuring vulnerable young people are kept safe and protected from the potential abuse of such measures. The home's admissions and discharge book has been updated and a new visitor book is now in use. The unused bedrooms no longer have an unpleasant odour; however, the shower repair is still required as the previous repair was not sufficient to remedy the damage. Arrangements are in hand for the plumber to attend to deal with this matter. A staffing and recruitment review has been undertaken to establish suitable staffing levels that can meet the diverse needs of the young people living at the home this has created an opportunity to develop a more gender and ethnically balanced staff team. Recruitment files have been reviewed and now contain up-to-date employee photographs. Evidence of telephone enquiries to verify written references for prospective employees are still not in place. Young people's files contain clearly written information with sufficiently detailed risk assessments that assists them to understand their journey through care. The physical intervention records have been improved to ensure all incidents of restraint are recorded clearly and young people's views about an incident of restraint are sought and recorded. The Statement of Purpose is a working document under review with regard to the previous inspection requirements and the updated information in respect of new staff. The home has ensured the safety of young people by erecting a fence to divide the premises from the driveway and car park.

The home has undergone several changes since the last inspection. All the previous young people have moved out and three new young people were admitted in August and November. One new staff member has been appointed with a further two awaiting appointment. These appointments will further strengthen the existing staff team to ensure they can meet the current and emerging needs of young people. Placements are still settling and young people are making some sound progress relative to the time they have lived at the home. Staff are pursuing access to appropriate education provision as a priority for the older young people to ensure their future progress and to achieve outcomes that are more positive for them. Staff present as positive about their level of engagement with young people and invest in

them regardless of their starting points promoting an environment where young people can thrive. Behaviour management is a particular area of strength at this home where young people are learning to take responsibility for their behaviour. There have been minimal incidents of restraint and no incidences of absconding or missing from home. Young people are treated fairly and all expressed concerns are responded to effectively.

Young people's views are gathered and used to influence the running of the home and its future developments. Examples of how staff have listened to young people and considered their views are; in the lounge, which has been completely redecorated and furnished. Young people have been involved in choosing colours, furniture, and helping to paint. A young person has redecorated the self-contained flat with support from staff and been involved with other repairs at the home. Young people are able to take ownership of their home and feel valued and respected. Young people are encouraged to be involved in the staff recruitment process.

There is good feedback and consultation with other professionals from social care, health and youth offending teams. A social worker has said, 'the staff at the home have acted appropriately and have followed the young person's care plan.'

There are quality assurance systems being used to monitor the operation and management of the home; however, the views of children, young people, parents and partners are not consistently being sought during the Regulation 33 visits, which will give evaluations that are more robust. The manager regularly reviews the quality of care to ensure shortfalls are identified and suitable action taken to address them. These measures ensure the standards within the home remain high.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated; in particular, ensure the shower is repaired or replaced and the floor covering in young people's bedrooms and the playroom is replaced (NMS 10.3)
- ensure that the children's home has a clear Statement of Purpose which is available to and understood by staff and children and reflected in any policies, procedures and guidance and is available to the responsible authority and any parent or person with parental responsibility (NMS 13.1)
- ensure that telephone enquiries are made to verify written references on prospective employees (NMS 16.1)
- ensure clear and effective procedures are in place for monitoring and controlling the activities of the home; specifically, demonstrate how information within Regulation 33 & 34 reports, including the captured views of children, parents and

partners, is being evaluated and used to promote continuous improvement and development. (NMS 21.1)