

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC014848
Inspection date	29/01/2014
Inspector	Jennie Christopher
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	24/07/2013
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2014

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is registered to provide care for up to six young females who experience emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is part of a private company which has an independent fostering agency, a total of three residential homes and an independent school.

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**.

At the last full inspection in July 2013, the overall quality rating for the service was judged as good with three requirements and four recommendations made. The home demonstrates continued improvement in the quality of care provided with a commitment to service development. A particular strength of the home is the strong and consistent staff team who bond with young people to promote a positive home environment.

At the last inspection requirements were set regarding making the Statement of Purpose available to Ofsted; ensuring restraint did not use more force than necessary and ensuring sanctions recording is in line with regulations. All requirements have been met satisfactorily. The updated Statement of Purpose has been forwarded to Ofsted and contains all the information required. The pre-printed restraint records no longer contain the terms 'locks' or 'pain compliance'. As found at the last inspection, these holds had not been used, but the terminology of a 'lock' hold was. It is now clear to staff what holds they are able to use and the correct names for these holds. This has led to greater clarity in records. The behaviour

management and restraint policy has been updated, making it implicitly clear which holds are appropriate to use, and under what circumstances. Sanction records have been amended to be in line with regulations. While some sanctions have appeared disproportionate, this has now been fully rectified with the Registered Manager reviewing and amending sanctions when necessary. As a result this has not been an issue for several months. There is an increasing level of consultation with young people throughout the sanction process, which has led to proportionate and effective sanctions, but more significantly, changes in unwanted behaviour. An example is collaborative working with a young person who is experimenting with alcohol with friends from College, which has been extremely effective.

The recommendations set at the last inspection have been partially or fully met. As noted previously, the behaviour management policy has been updated to clarify what sanctions are appropriate, encouraging a joint approach with staff and young people. Staff have benefited from updated child protection and safeguarding training, ensuring they have a sound awareness of what to do should they be concerned for a young person's wellbeing. The use of locks in the home is carefully based on young people's individual risk assessments. However the impact of an individual's needs on all young people living in the home is not as effective and requires more development. As a result this remains a recommendation. The management team are evaluating and where needed, amending and updating all the policies and procedures for the home. Many key policies have been updated and are informing current practice. This is still a work in progress and therefore remains a recommendation.

Since the last inspection, work has continued to evaluate the service provided and to identify areas for development. Plans are clear and realistic. Improvements include assessing the effectiveness of staff handovers and the homes recording systems, amending these processes as necessary to ensure they are as informative as possible. The home managers are preparing for changes in the Children's Homes Regulations through updating policies, procedures and practice to reflect the upcoming changes. Furthermore they are assessing the Regulation 33 visitors and their monitoring. It is hoped the newly appointed external visitor will employ monitoring systems which scrutinise the quality of care and the home environment. Evaluative reports of independent monitoring visits and six monthly monitoring by managers already demonstrate an excellent level of consultation with young people, staff and other significant people and new procedures will build on this strong foundation.

Young people continue to receive well planned care from an experienced and enthusiastic staff team, who are thoughtful and inventive in their approach to care. Young people have a positive view of the home and staff and say they feel safe in the home. Observed interactions demonstrate reciprocal relationships where staff are proactive in their approach to keeping young people safe. Staff have clear boundaries which have enabled young people to take steps to positively manage their own behaviour. Robust links with external agencies help inform care plans, ensuring consistent approaches to managing risky behaviours. The high staffing ratio enables young people benefit from the care and attention they require to learn how

to keep safe. The culture within the home celebrates individuality and diversity and young people receive quality care and support based on their individualised needs.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure policies and procedures which are available to staff are reviewed and up to date (NMS 22)
- ensure that where it is necessary to adjust the environment to safeguard and protect young people, the use of locks is based on careful risk assessment which is reviewed regularly. Further ensure that restrictions on movement for young person do not adversely affect others. (Vol 5 statutory guidance, paragraph 2.108 and NMS 10.4)

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*.