

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC015264
Inspection date	08/11/2012
Inspector	Caroline Oldham
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Date of last inspection	29/05/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to seven children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, and/or learning difficulties. This is a children's home which specialises in offering long-term placements to boys. The home has an independent special school on site.

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 previous inspection in May 2012 the overall quality rating for the service was judged as good, with three recommendations set.

The manager was asked to identify any concerns about specific incidents, and to identify patterns and trends. New paperwork has been introduced to alert him to any trends and to highlight specific incidents. Six monthly reports are now being produced to enable the manager to have a more strategic overview of the provision. This ensures that young people have high standards of care, and that staff skills are developed to provide this level of care.

The home was asked to ensure that the wishes, feeling and views of children are taken into account in any developments. Young people are now involved in staff recruitment and their views sought prior to offers of appointment. In addition, young people are now more actively involved in choosing activities, and the internal décor within the home.

The home was asked to encourage young people to record their views following any sanctions, disciplinary measures or restraint. A sheet for this purpose has been devised, but is rarely completed. Although opportunities to implement this have been limited, this recommendation has not yet been fully met, and therefore is repeated.

The manager and the senior staff team continue to make further developments to improve the level of care. All the staff are dedicated to provide individualised levels of care to the young people. All young people receive education at the on-site school. For older young people there are opportunities for work experience and college placements, so that all young people receive an educational programme that meets their specific needs. Attendance at the school is excellent and young people make significant progress given their starting points. This helps young people grow enormously in confidence and they take pride in their achievements. Young people are healthy due to good primary health care, and leading an active lifestyle. Young people all pursue individual hobbies and interests which include competitive swimming, lifesaving, cycling and Scouts.

Staff have introduced a positive reward scheme, which works well, and young people work hard to earn rewards through good behaviour. All rewards are individualised for each young person, and young people spoke with pride about 'earning' a trip to 'Cadbury's World', and having a hamster. Sanctions are often agreed by the young people and accepted for misdemeanours. Restraints are rare occurrences. However, the recent system devised for recording their views following a restraint or a sanction is rarely used. Social workers report that their young person 'is a different child' since coming to the home. They say that young people are able to build up relationships with staff and each other. The atmosphere is like a family home and young people become tolerant and accepting of each other. Generally young people behave very well and are learning to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

There are good systems in place to keep young people safe. Staff receive all basic training in safeguarding and child protection, and staff are now enrolled on additional specialist training. Staffing levels are high to provide good levels of care. Young people very rarely go missing, and bullying is not an issue in the home. Young people confirm that they feel safe.

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 where any sanctions, disciplinary measures or restraint are used, children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records kept by the home. (NMS 3.18)

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)*.