

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC015264
Inspection date	10/01/2014
Inspector	Stephen Halliley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Date of last inspection	29/04/2013
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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 **inadequate progress**.

This home was last inspected by Ofsted in April 2013 and was judged to be good. Since this time the one requirement and two of the three recommendations raised have been fully addressed and there has been some improvement with regard to the third recommendation. There has been progress made by the home and young people continue to feel safe and happy to be living here. However there were major shortfalls noted in respect of the recording of fire drills and fire checks and the clarity of Regulation 33 reports in this regard.

The registered Manager has included a script template in the front of the restraint record for staff to follow. Reports are written in a narrative style but the script has ensured all required information is included, specifically the time, location and duration of restraints and the views of the young person which were previously not consistently recorded.

The Registered Manager has a development plan in place aimed at driving this home,

and the business as a whole, forward over the coming year. This is clearly available to all staff ensuring they are fully involved in the planned changes.

There has been a wide range of staff training offered since the last inspection. This has ensured all staff now receive their updates to mandatory training courses within the timescales laid out in the homes own policies and procedures. Additional training is planned to cover safeguarding, child exploitation, e-safety and making safer choices in the coming months. This will further strengthen the staff teams understanding of these issues and increase their knowledge of how to keep young people safe.

The frequency of staff supervision has improved for the majority of staff. However, some staff have gaps of two to three months between supervisions. As a result the recommendation to ensure all staff receive regular supervision made at the last inspection will become a requirement.

Managers and staff have worked hard to improve the service they offer since the last inspection; restraint recording paperwork has been streamlined and made more consistent, medication reviews for young people have been regularly chased and staff are reflecting more on their practice and why they do what they do when working with young people. This improved professional self-awareness has resulted in improved use of de-escalation and early intervention techniques when staff are aware young people's behaviour is beginning to escalate. This has resulted in there being no physical restraints since September 2013.

Young people remain happy living in this home and say they continue to feel safe and well cared for. They take part in a wide range of varied activities. Their achievements include taking part in swimming galas and dance productions and being designated as senior members at youth club. This involves them being given some responsibility for running the club, from setting it up and supporting their peers to closing up at the end of the night. This has had a significant positive impact on young people's self-confidence and self-esteem.

Young people are fully aware of the actions they should take if there were to be a fire in the home. Both young people and staff say they were involved in a fire drill in December though there is no record of this having taken place. The registered manager and designated fire officer are clear that weekly fire alarm checks and checks on fire extinguishers takes place along with monthly testing of the emergency lighting system. However no records could be located to support this. This brings into question the welfare and safety of young people should there be a fire in the home. The Registered Manager responded to this shortfall immediately by planning future tests with the in-house fire officer and contacting the fire maintenance contractors to carry out a service of fire fighting equipment. He also plans to monitor records more diligently to ensure they are being completed rather than relying on his presence when fire drills and system checks take place as being an effective monitoring system.

Monthly monitoring visits undertaken by the provider state that 'regular fire checks

and fire drills are completed and recorded'. This indicates that the monitoring being carried out is not sufficiently robust or effective. Additionally, reports are inaccurate as they clearly indicate records are kept though these are not, in fact, being maintained.

As a direct result of the potential impact on young people's health and safety and the lack of robust management overview in this regard this service is judged to be making inadequate progress.

Areas for improvement

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
27 (2001)	ensure all persons employed by the registered person receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal (Reg 27 (4) (a))	28/02/2014
29 (2001)	ensure the registered person shall maintain in the children's home the records specified in Schedule 4 and ensure they are kept up to date; specifically a record of every fire drill or fire alarm test conducted (Reg 29 (1) Schedule 4 (6))	31/01/2014
32 (2001)	ensure the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (fire safety) Order 2005 and any regulations made under it, except for Article 23, are complied with in respect of the home; specifically article 4(1) (d) (e) (Reg 32 (1A) (b))	31/01/2014
33 (2001)	the person carrying out the visit shall prepare a written report on the conduct of the home; specifically ensuring the report accurately reflects the findings of the visit. (Reg 33 (4) ©)	28/02/2014

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*.