

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	26/11/2012
Inspector	Pete Hylton
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	16/05/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is part of a range of children's services within a private care organisation. The home is registered to offer care and accommodation to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties; three are accommodated in the main house, one in a satellite unit some distance away.

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**.

This home was last inspected in May 2012. The home was judged to be adequate and four requirements and eight recommendations for improvements were made at this time. The home has demonstrated good progress in meeting required actions; the four requirements and seven out of the eight recommendations have been met.

The three requirements and one recommendation relating to restraint and sanctions are fully met. The staff team now record all required details on the restraint records. Furthermore, additional training has been given to senior staff in the home and this has resulted in improved monitoring and recording. The views of young people are clearly recorded and all young people are actively encouraged and supported to discuss incidents, their feelings, thoughts and concerns. This results in an environment where young people feel respected and listened to. Restraint is only used where absolutely necessary and for the purposes of keeping young people safe. Recognition of positive behaviour means that young people are rewarded and encouraged to act in a socially acceptable manner. This has resulted in a decrease in sanctions. Where sanctions are used, they are fair, proportionate and clearly

detailed. This ensures that young people and staff fully understand the reasons behind a sanction and any timescales or financial reparations involved. A young person commented that 'it's really fair here.'

All young people are now regularly attending appropriate educational placements. In some cases, there has been considerable progress. The routine of the home has improved as a result and young people are actively encouraged to develop their academic achievement. Therefore, the fourth requirement made at the last inspection has been fully met. Where the attendance or achievement of young people causes concern, the staff team are swift to intervene. Excellent relationships between the home and school support the progress that young people make. A teacher commented that the staff are 'excellent at joint working and discussing concerns.'

An improved development plan clearly sets out the plans for the home and lists key areas of service development. Furthermore, the views of young people have been sought and embedded into this document. As a result, young people are affecting change in the home and their views, wishes and feelings are listened to and acted upon. The Registered Manager has ensured that a policy on the use of electronic monitoring alarms is available for reference and the young people's guide contains the appropriate contact details for the Children's Rights Director. These improvements mean that young people's safety is further promoted and that they can speak to appropriate support services if they so wish.

Where concerns arise over the welfare or safety of young people, the Registered Manager ensures that swift and appropriate action is taken. Serious incidents are notified to the appropriate agencies and the safety needs of young people are promoted at all times. This results in a safe environment where young people know that they can discuss their concerns and feel safe from harm. Incidents of young people going missing from the home are brief and quickly resolved. Since the last inspection, the recording of young people going missing from the home has partly improved. The majority of records do contain the required information. However, there has been one occasion where this information was not fully completed. Therefore the recommendation made at the last inspection is not fully met and has been repeated. The outcomes for young people are not negatively impacted as a result of this shortfall.

The individual needs and preferences of young people are fully explored and recorded in improved care plans. As a result, young people's views and wishes underpin the care provided by the staff team. A young person commented about the staff, 'they are caring, they help you to do stuff, support you, try to make the best for you.' Young people's cultural, personal, religious and dietary needs are now better recorded and embedded into daily living. This means that young people are now cared for in line with their expressed needs, wishes and preferences. Furthermore, young people are making good progress in developing their identities and emotional resilience. Relationships between young people and staff are positive and all young people are encouraged to discuss their concerns, worries or anxieties. A young person commented that they are 'able to talk to staff if things bother me.'

New carpets and the provision of homely touches including photographs of young people have enhanced the homely environment. The satellite property, which is part of this home's registration, has been redecorated and repaired where necessary. For example, broken door frames and interior damage have been repaired. Where further damage does occur to the properties, repairs are swiftly completed. As a result, young people know that the staff are committed to providing a well-presented home.

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 written records kept by the home when a child goes missing, detail action taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return, any reasons given by the child for running away from the home, any action taken in the light of those reasons. This information is shared with the responsible authority and where appropriate, their parents. (NMS 5.10)

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*.