

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC023737
Inspection date	06/03/2014
Inspector	David Putnam
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	02/10/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is owned by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for a maximum of three young people, who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Young people living in the home are able to access education through separately registered provision which is managed by the same organisation. Therapy or counselling is also available to young people if this is appropriate.

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 the overall effectiveness of the home was judged to be good. One requirement and four recommendations were made. All these have been addressed and have resulted in improvements to the service.

Changes have been made to the way in which actions following restraints are recorded. Discussions with staff are now incorporated into one central record confirming that any staff involved in a restraint have the opportunity to explore the event. This contributes to the review of restraint practice in the home and helps to identify opportunities to use alternative approaches. As a result the use of restraint in this home continues to be extremely rare, with only one brief restraint taking place since the last inspection.

The Registered Manager took prompt action after the last inspection to effectively communicate the content of the home's development plan to all staff. Staff now understand how their contribution links to the attainment of clear targets for

improvement.

Senior managers in the organisation responded quickly to refine procedures relating to the recruitment of new staff and appraisals of performance for existing staff. Changes to policies now unequivocally communicate expectations within this home and across the whole organisation. There is now clarity about how and when support staff undertake telephone checks following the receipt of written references for new staff. In addition young people now have the opportunity to contribute their views to information considered at annual staff appraisals. This helps young people to understand that their opinions are valued.

Leaders and managers fully understand the expectations to record actions and decisions in response to any allegation made against staff. This recommendation had been met prior to the end of the last inspection and there have been no further allegations of this nature.

Leaders and managers continue to demonstrate a commitment to improving the experiences of and outcomes for young people. An established and motivated staff team continue to get to know young people extremely well. Close liaison with placing authorities enables robust planning that leads to positive changes in young people's lives. Young people make genuine and demonstrable progress resulting from the consistency of care they receive. When appropriate, young people are helped to make sense of past experiences through access to therapy or counselling. Young people who missed significant periods of education earlier in their lives now achieve full attendance in provision identified to meet their individual needs. When appropriate young people secure places at college, making clear plans to remain in education after leaving school.

Young people are unanimously positive about the care they receive. They clearly but simply demonstrate a sense of belonging by not running away from this home. This is a significant change for some young people who previously put themselves at significant risk when missing from home or care. Parents identify positive changes in their children. Comments include 'She is turning into a lovely young lady' and 'Her personality is coming out.' They describe the staff team as supportive and acknowledge that 'It is a great comfort knowing she is safe.'

Young people engage in wide ranging activities in the wider community. This supports them to have new experiences and learn new skills. Some demonstrate social responsibility through representing other learners on school councils or volunteering in a local charity shop.

Managers and staff work with placing authorities to ensure young people benefit from meaningful contact with family members and close friends. Those travelling long distances are provided with hotel accommodation by the organisation. This enables them to spend more time with the young people. Potential problems resulting from travelling on the day of contact are eliminated. The quality of contact is also enhanced as those involved feel rested and refreshed. This contributes to

parents concluding that 'The distance doesn't matter because I know she is in the right place.'

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*.