

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	19/02/2014
Inspector	David Putnam
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	12/11/2013
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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 children, who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Children 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 children 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 **satisfactory progress**.

At the last full inspection the overall effectiveness of this home was judged to be outstanding. All individual judgement areas were also found to be outstanding. One recommendation was made. The Registered Manager took immediate action to secure the agreement of parents and placing authorities to use alarms on the bedroom doors of young people at night. This was achieved within days of the end of the last inspection. Signed documents now confirm that these alarms are only used to safeguard young people and promote their welfare and development.

Young people benefit from improvements to the quality of the internal environment within the home. Hallways and stairwells of the home are in the process of being redecorated. The colours chosen reflect the preferences of young people and provide a warm and welcoming feel. Plans to replace carpets in these communal areas are in place. These are scheduled to be fitted upon completion of the decoration.

Young people remain positive about the staff and the quality of care they receive. Social workers from placing authorities say that they are very pleased with the service provided to young people. Social workers also express praise for the way in which leaders, managers and staff work together with them to support young people and meet their needs.

In the short time since the full inspection the behaviours of some young people have become extremely challenging. As a result the number of restraints within the home has increased. Equally the frequency with which young people go missing from the home has also increased. The experienced Registered Manager continues to lead an established staff team who demonstrate genuine commitment to and affection for the young people in their care. Every effort is made to avoid the use of restraint. Effective recording systems reflect that restraint is only used as a last resort. Consistent efforts are made to keep young people safe through searching for them and staying in contact with them whenever their whereabouts are not known. Strong links with local police support staff to help locate and recover young people when possible. Social workers say they are, 'Full of praise for the way staff manage difficult situations.' They also state that, 'Staff always have the best interests of young people at heart.'

Meanwhile, outcomes for other young people continue to progress well. Some maintain full attendance in education and work towards completing GCSE's at the end of the school year. Staff advocate for young people moving into the home. Their pro-active and prompt approach helps to identify resources to meet young people's educational needs. Young people continue to take part in a range of activities within the community. Some maintain their commitment to work experience, despite challenges and difficulties in other areas of their lives.

Established systems continue to support the formation of clear plans that identify how the individual needs of young people are met on a daily basis. For example, health needs are effectively identified and clear targets are put in place to ensure these are achieved. However, planning for work to support young people in preparing for adulthood is less well evidenced. A lack of meaningful assessment means that current strengths or areas for development are not realistically identified. This leads to a lack of direction in the focus of individual work and contributes to a reduction in the engagement of young people.

Reviews of the quality of care are undertaken regularly by the Registered Manager in line with the amended regulatory framework. However, these reports do not clearly demonstrate how contributions from young people, their parents or placing authorities link to improvements within the home.

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
34 (2001)	establish and maintain a system for monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6 at least once in every three months; and improving the quality of care provided in the children's home. The system shall provide for consultation with children accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities. (Regulation 34 (1) and (3))	30/04/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure that young people are supported to develop in all areas described in this standard; in particular that the skills of young people are effectively assessed and individual work is planned and carried out to help prepare them for adulthood. (NMS 12.1)

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*.