

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	11/02/2014
Inspector	David Putnam
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	13/06/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is owned and operated 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 registered provision provided by the organisation. Therapy or counselling is also made 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 home was judged as good overall. One requirement and three recommendations were made. Leaders and managers undertook prompt and effective action to address these matters.

The Registered Manager ensured that the most up-to-date statement of purpose was submitted to Ofsted immediately after the last inspection. Subsequent changes within the staff team have also been communicated through prompt submission of amendments in the form of an annex to this document. In this way Ofsted is consistently kept informed of changes within the home.

Leaders and managers work closely with placing authorities to enable young people to experience free time in the community safely. The individual circumstances and needs of each young person are effectively considered and planned for. As a result, young people are able to maintain contact with their friends. Through experiencing

suitable levels of independence in a planned way, young people grow in confidence and manage themselves appropriately when away from direct adult supervision.

Young people are now looked after by care staff who either hold the required qualification or are actively working towards completing this. Leaders and managers demonstrate their commitment to having a suitably qualified staff team by providing time for personal study when this is necessary.

The quality of written records relating to individual young people demonstrates significant improvement since the last inspection. The content of information recorded is noticeably more consistent. Full recording is evidenced for each day. The current shift pattern enables an overview of events from one member of staff that provides a good level of insight into the lives of young people.

Staff sensitively support some young people to move on from the home after living there for many years. Close liaison with responsible authorities and careful consideration of individual needs enables young people to see progression to the next stage of their lives as a positive experience. Similarly leaders and managers work closely with placing authorities to consider how they will meet the needs of young people before they come to live in the home. Planned introductions are made whenever possible to support young people to visualise where they are moving to and understand the services available to them. Comprehensive plans are prepared and used to outline how the needs of individual young people will be met. Plans are reviewed regularly and amended as necessary to reflect updated information.

Staff demonstrate resilience and patience in their attempts to provide consistency and routine for all young people. Placing social workers say that staff manage the challenges young people present 'really well'. The physical restraint of young people is rare and only ever used as a last resort, in line with the regulatory framework. Some young people identify what they see as a decline in the décor and fabric of the home as a result of the behaviours of others. However, when damage is caused within the home a dedicated maintenance team ensures swift and efficient repair.

Some young people express dissatisfaction that parts of the home are locked at night. They point out that this does not happen in a normal family home and say that this should not occur in their home. They indicate that some of their negative behaviours are in protest about this decision made by managers. The Registered Manager is able to explain why this decision has been made at this time. However, a recommendation is made to ensure that restrictions on movement around the home are not implemented unnecessarily.

The safety of young people and staff is promoted through having regular drills to practice the emergency evacuation procedure. However, these drills invariably take place at similar times of the day. A recommendation is made to include drills at night or early in the morning so that staff and young people know what to do if an emergency occurs at these times.

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 physical restrictions on normal movement within or from the home are not used unless this is necessary to safeguard children and promote their welfare and development. Such measures are only used where agreed with the responsible authority and, if appropriate, the parents. Such restrictions for one child do not impose similar restrictions on other children (NMS 10.4)
- ensure that there is an emergency escape plan that all staff and children are familiar with and have practiced so they know what to do in an emergency; in particular that this includes regular drills at night time. (NMS 10.9)

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*.