

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	30/03/2012
Inspector	David Putnam
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	02/08/2011
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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 (March 2011)*.

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.

Service information

Brief description of the service

This privately owned children's home is registered for up to three children or young people.

Progress

Since their previous inspection the service is judged to be making **satisfactory** progress.

At the last inspection the home was judged to be good overall. One requirement was made to improve the educational attainment of young people. This has been met. Young people now benefit from improved communication between young people's education provision and the home. Staff support young people in their education setting when this is required. They also encourage young people to complete homework when this is set. Achievements of young people are emphasised and celebrated by staff. Young people still struggle at times, but now have a better understanding of what is expected to accomplish their personal goals.

Four recommendations were made at the last inspection. Three of these have been fully met. Managers acknowledge that work is still in progress to complete the last of these. Resident's meetings are now held weekly. Notes demonstrate that young people contribute their ideas consistently. Some responses are immediate. More complex matters are fed through to staff meetings. Young people say they feel staff listen to them. They give examples of being able to choose how to decorate their own rooms and make suggestions about décor in communal areas. Parents confirm that their children are able to choose their own décor, which they see as positive. A more proportionate approach to risk assessment is now taken following a review by managers in the home and the parent organisation. This results in a more comfortable and normal experience for young people, while potential risk is still managed.

The parent organisation has amended the details set out in the restraint log. A new document was issued to the home in September 2011. This new log fully meets the requirements. However, a review of the restraint log highlighted that staff do not complete a separate record for each individual restraint. This leads to limited detail of complex situations being recorded. A new requirement is made to address this matter.

Work to prepare young people for independence has begun. Managers are open and honest about their desire to progress this aspect of the service for young people. They recognise the efforts of staff, but acknowledge that more needs to be done. The Registered Manager's post remains vacant. However, an application from the acting manager has been received by Ofsted and is being progressed. The acting

manager and other professionals continue to support staff to understand and manage the behaviours of young people. The acting manager is supported by an area manager and a range of other support staff from the parent organisation.

A children's guide for the home does exist, but young people find this difficult to read. The guide contains limited use of pictures or other visual stimulation. The home does not currently have an alternative guide that communicates key information in a more accessible format. Managers say that work is underway for the children and young people's forum to review the guide. A representative from this home attends the forum. A recommendation is made that this work is completed.

Placing social workers refer to the staff as, 'child focused'. They say that young people are able to receive individual attention, due to the limited number of young people in placement. Parents say that staff are, 'easy to talk to and get along with'. Staff recognise the importance of contact for children and young people. They are proactive in promoting this, travelling long distances to support young people. Staff encourage young people to be active and remain healthy through a range of activities. Young people describe taking part in different activities in the home and in the wider community. In the past young people have raised money for charity by completing sponsored events. Parents say that staff, 'organise lovely trips and the children go away on holiday every August for a week'. Various photographs from their holidays are on display in different parts of the home. Young people talk positively about going away. The quality of care and outcomes for children and young people are maintained.

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
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in the children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose. (Regulation 17B (3))	30/04/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure where a child requires it, the children's guide is available through suitable alternative methods of communication. (NMS 13.6)

