

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC024808
Inspection date	21/01/2014
Inspector	Pete Hylton
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	26/07/2013
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2014

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is registered to accommodate up to four young people of either gender. The service is owned by a private company. The purpose of the home is to offer young people a service which provides semi-independent living in a supported environment.

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 **inadequate progress**.

This home was last inspected in July 2013 and was judged to be outstanding. One recommendation was made and this related to ensuring that all young people had an up to date pathway plan. The acting manager has ensured that all required documentation is now on young people's files. As a result, the recommendation from the last inspection is judged to be met. The home's Registered Manager is currently absent from the home. The organisation has ensured suitable manager cover has been put into place. However, the acting manager has failed to ensure that all adults working in the home are safely recruited. This means that the home is judged to be making inadequate progress.

Agency and temporary staff are used only where absolutely necessary. The acting manager ensures that consistency is maintained wherever possible in the staff team. However, records of agency staff who have worked at the home demonstrate that required checks have not been made by the acting manager. For example, employment histories are missing and references have not been checked by the

acting manager. Furthermore, the acting manager has not been able to review the qualifications of these staff or their experience, skills or abilities. As a result, there have been periods where young people have come into contact with staff who have not been appropriately vetted prior to working at the home. There has been no demonstrable impact, to date, on the outcomes for young people as a result of this shortfall. However, the potential has existed for young people to come into contact with staff who may not be suitable to work in the home. A requirement has been made to address this shortfall.

Restraint is rarely used in the home. Where it does occur, it is brief and appropriately applied for the purposes of protecting young people from harm. All required details are recorded and young people are supported in discussing their views. Sanctions are used to discourage socially unacceptable behaviours. All sanctions are fair, reasonable and proportionate. Young people are encouraged to reflect and understand the impact that their behaviour has on others. This results in young people taking responsibility for their actions.

The home continues to be maintained to a good standard. Young people are encouraged to relax in the homely environment. There is ample space for young people to pursue their individual interests and hobbies. For example, a communal computer is accessed by young people and bikes are provided for young people to commute to the local facilities. As a result, young people are able to develop their knowledge of the local area and make good progress in developing their community links and social networks.

Complaints from young people are appropriately managed and resolved amicably. A clear complaints policy is freely available in the home. As a result, young people know that they are able to raise their concerns and that these are acted upon. Young people are encouraged to discuss their views, wishes and opinions in regular house meetings. A range of appropriate matters are discussed and young people are encouraged to develop their tolerance of peers and communal living skills. A young person commented that 'we talk about issues at the young people's meetings' and 'the staff help us to sort issues out.' Key working sessions are well planned and delivered in line with the young person's care plan. As a result, young people know their targets and areas for development. However, requests made by young people are not always acted upon appropriately. For example, where young people have requested changes to the décor, this has not been actioned or discussed with young people as to why it can't be completed. However, it has been noted on the home's development plan but similarly not actioned. As a result, young people's requests are not given appropriate consideration and the home's development plan is not appropriately reviewed or monitored. Two recommendations have been made to address these shortfalls.

Young people continue to make good progress in developing their independence and readiness for adulthood. All young people follow clearly defined plans for developing their life skills. These plans are regularly reviewed by young people and staff. As a result, young people understand the progress they are making and are prepared for making positive transitions to adulthood. Furthermore, young people continue to

access educational and training opportunities and maintain regular attendance. This results in a home where young people are encouraged and supported to realise and achieve their aspirations.

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
26 (2001)	ensure that a person does not work at the children's home unless full and satisfactory information is available in relation to him in respect of each of the matters specified in Schedule 2. (Regulation 26 (3) (d))	28/02/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure that children understand how their views have been taken into account, and where significant wishes or concerns are not acted upon, they are helped to understand why (NMS 1.2)
- ensure that the registered person has a written development plan, reviewed annually, for the future of the home, either identifying any planned changes in the operation or resources of the service, or confirming the continuation of the home's current operation and resource. (NMS 15.2)

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*.