

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC025420
Inspection date	30/01/2013
Inspector	Chris Scully
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	29/06/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This is a children's home for six young people of either gender. The home cares for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties and drug or alcohol dependence, who come from many parts of England and Wales. The home is one of several owned by a private company.

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**.

The home was last inspected on the 29 June 2012. The overall effectiveness was judged to be good. Following the inspection one statutory requirement relating to fire precautions was raised along with five recommendations. These related to maintenance, behaviour management risk assessments, missing from care risk assessments, staff supervision and key worker records.

Young people's safety and well-being is enhanced. This is because the home has liaised with the fire authority regarding wedging open the fire doors. Self-closing devices have been fitted to a number of doors, which now close automatically if the fire alarm is activated. Repairs have been carried out to the fire escape and flat roof to ensure they are safe and appropriately maintained. Consequently, any fire would be contained and young people can evacuate the building quickly and safely. Unauthorised persons are not able to gain access to the property because the lock on the front door has been repaired. There remains some damage to the door but this is to be replaced.

The home has made appropriate progress in improving the recording practice such as the behaviour and missing from care risk assessments. This means staff have a clearer understanding of the behaviours and vulnerabilities of the young people. They are able to implement the missing from care procedures and alert police and others as to where some young people may be, such as trying to get back to their home area. This means young people are usually quickly located and return home safely.

However, inconsistencies remain in the recording of young people's key worker sessions. This includes a lack of clarity within the information such as references to inappropriate language. This does not provide a clear picture of the discussion with the young people or their comments. Young people are not signing the record, which means they are not able to take ownership of the discussion or the targets set. Therefore, this part of the recommendation has not been met.

Staff are now afforded regular opportunities for professional supervision with the Registered Manager or other senior staff. This means they are able to discuss what is going well and any areas for development. Staff continue to meet regularly as a team which means they are all aware of the young people's needs and any changes to their circumstances.

Monitoring of the home is appropriate and provides an insight into what the home does well and any areas for improvement. However, Ofsted has yet to receive copies of the home's Regulation 34 reports. This is an oversight by the home and does not impact upon the care provided. Also reports by the independent person do not show how they consult with social workers or the families of young people. Therefore, it is not clear as to how their views influence the improvement and development of the home.

Young people say everything is going 'ok' for them. Young people new to the home say everything is fine and that they know they can talk to staff about anything. The home is warm and welcoming and young people say they have had a say in the décor and new art work. Family members say they are pleased with the care provided. The home has initiated a compliments book which demonstrates how they are working well with other professionals. For example, Youth offending teams say, 'staff identify the young people's strengths and attempt to build upon them to increase young people's self-esteem and sense of identity.' Social worker's say staff help young people to set 'realistic boundaries and stick to them.'

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 reports reviewing the quality of care under Regulation 34 are

supplied to Ofsted at six monthly intervals within 28 days of completion (Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 3.14)

- ensure information is recorded clearly and in a way that will be helpful to young people when they access their files now or in the future; with particular reference to their key worker records (NMS 22.5)
- ensure the visit of the home carried out under Regulation 33 includes the relevant checks set out in regulations and guidance; with particular reference to ensuring that the young people's families and social workers are consulted. (NMS 21.7)

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*.