

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Stella Lovie
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	17/05/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home, one of a number of homes operated by a charitable organisation, provides care and accommodation for up to six children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties and learning disabilities.

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 **good progress**.

The home was last inspected in April 2013. It achieved an overall effectiveness judgement of good. There were no requirements made. Four recommendations were identified, three of which have been met at the point of the interim inspection. This demonstrates a commitment to learning from inspection. The only recommendation not met relates to ensuring that supervisors and supervisees always sign the written record of the supervision. This is not a significant shortfall as the Registered Manager is able to demonstrate that all staff receive regular supervision. Management oversight continues to be effective and robust.

Young people are well supported to develop their self-confidence, emotional resilience and self-esteem. They are helped to make sense of their past experiences, learn to manage their feelings and emotions and devise coping strategies to promote their resilience and psychological well-being. As a result, young people make improved and sustained progress in all areas of their lives. They enjoy their experience in the home and value the relationships they establish with staff. As one young person wrote in a critique of the last Ofsted inspection report: 'The whole children's home is in my opinion a very satisfactory, calm, relaxed and well-run

home. The staff are very caring and kind, they understand how you feel and they are very funny (sometimes a little annoying) and they are professional when they need to be. Overall I think the warm and inviting atmosphere makes this home one of the best in the organisation.' That positive atmosphere is evident from first entering the home, both in the cheerful behaviour of the young people, and in the comfortable, well-decorated physical environment.

Young people learn from the guidance of staff and the support of others, so they are in a better position in the future to take responsibility for their own actions. Their care experience is useful in preparing them for future adult life, such as learning to take responsibility, to share responsibilities with others, to consider others, and to do practical tasks like looking after their belongings, buildings and environment. This means that they are well prepared for the next steps in independence. However, although young people acquire these skills through structured plans developed by the home in line with their age and ability, they are not yet underpinned with formal pathway plans where appropriate.

Young people's views and opinions are listened to and this enables them to have a positive influence in the running of the home and allows them to make a purposeful contribution. As a result, young people feel highly valued, well informed and fully involved in all aspects of their care. Young people's rights to inclusion and participation are central to how the home operates and this promotes effective communication within the home. Staff ensure that young people are not isolated in the community they are living in and that they become fully integrated in the local leisure, education and community facilities. Young people engage regularly in sports and other active pursuits, and receive good quality advice and support to do so. This promotes their physical health and well-being.

Young people enjoy positive, friendly but professional relationships with staff which are underpinned by highly effective behaviour management strategies based on praise, incentives and realistic individual targets. This results in very few physical restraints and only minimal and appropriate use of sanctions. As a result, the level of restraint since the last inspection has reduced. Sanctions reflect the principles of reparation and restitution. This helps to influence young people's behaviour constructively. There have been no episodes of young people going missing from the home since the previous inspection. This demonstrates that staff are successful in helping them to find more constructive ways of coping with their distress or anxiety than by running away. They work with the young people to ensure they feel safe and to support them to find other means of expressing their distress. As a result, young people's safety is highly promoted.

Investigations into allegations or suspicion of harm are handled fairly, quickly and consistently. This ensures that young people are protected effectively, and that all parties receive appropriate support. As one local authority designated officer commented: 'Staff have evidenced great patience, professional empathy and skill in dealing with both the young person and their relative. The recording has been of a very high standard, it greatly assisted our understanding of how the welfare of the young person is being met in placement. This in turn led to a unanimous outcome of

the meeting. The home's recording and regular liaison with the social worker has also furthered social care's understanding of the young person, which will have a bearing on the council's future plans for him. I wish to acknowledge the high quality of this work from this home.'

In conclusion, the home demonstrates continued improvement in quality of care, safeguarding and outcomes for young people. It has addressed most of the recommendations that were raised at the previous inspection. It is therefore making good progress.

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 the home contributes to the pathway plan for 'eligible' care leavers and works collaboratively with the young person's social worker in implementing the plan (NMS 12.2)
- ensure that the written or electronic supervision record is signed by the supervisor and the member of staff at the end of the supervision. (NMS 19.5)

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*.