

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	07/01/2014
Inspector	Angus Mackay
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	20/06/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This is a privately-run home which provides care and accommodation for up to four young people. This home caters for young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

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 inspection judgement was good at the last full inspection on 20 June 2013, with one requirement and one recommendation made for improvement. The home has successfully addressed the requirement and the recommendation and has made a number of further improvements to the service. In particular the home has made extensive improvements to fire safety measures in the home and has updated fire risk assessments. Since the last inspection communal areas have been redecorated and new furniture put in place, making a warm homely environment for young people. One requirement was made at this inspection and two recommendations for improvement.

At the last inspection the home had an established system for monitoring the matters in Schedule 6 but the manager was not consistently completing it. Since that time the manager has consistently recorded his monitoring of the home and is using this information in his evaluation of the quality of care provided. The manager is due to submit his first report to HMCI, this month, and at appropriate intervals thereafter. The manager maintains a development plan for the home which he uses to track

progress in service developments. Consequently young people live in a constantly improving environment and are actively involved in commenting on improvements.

External monitoring of the home has been inconsistent and has not looked at young people missing from care. Consequently the manager is lacking an independent view of the conduct of the home and young people miss an opportunity to comment on their care. Young people confirm that they feel safe in the home and enjoy excellent relationships with staff minimising the impact of this lack of regular monitoring.

The home has a small appropriately qualified staff team. All staff receive regular supervision, appraisal and training. All staff have recently completed fire warden training and health and safety training, following actions advised by the local fire safety officer. The home's training and development plan requires updating to ensure staff remain able to meet the complex needs of the young people.

All young people in the home are making progress in many aspects of their development. One social worker said, 'The young person has benefitted from being there. They have worked brilliantly with him. His behaviour is still a problem but many of his problems have reduced.' Where appropriate parents work closely with the home and see positive changes in their children.. One parent said, 'It is unbelievable where he has come from he can explain things which are bothering him now. He is listening to the manager and is comparing what the manager says to what I said to him in the past. He is now able to reflect on what he has done and learn from it.'

Most young people are attending full time education courses and receive support from staff to help them in achieving good attendance. The home works closely with social workers and education departments. One education department commented, 'I have worked with the home for some time and they have fantastic outcomes with very difficult young people.' Those young people who do not attend full time education are provided with home tuition and work to prepare them for engagement in full time courses. The home is good at continuing to support the most difficult young people, including those excluded from school for extreme behaviours. Young people receive excellent support from staff in these circumstances. Comments from education workers include, 'They are very professional in their work with young people,' and 'they are working closely with me to identify a suitable education provision.'

Young people rarely go missing from the home and when they do they contact the home to reassure them about their safety. Many of the young people were frequently missing from previous placements. One social worker said of one young person, 'In previous settings he was always missing but he has rarely gone missing from there. If he does go missing he keeps in touch with them.' Scrutiny of records shows that all young people have reduced their instances of going missing and placing themselves at extreme risk.

Young people enjoy excellent relationships with staff. One young person said of the home, 'It does feel like a normal family home here.' Social workers, parents and

education workers comment positively on the quality of relationships and the benefits accruing from them. One social worker commented, 'He speaks very fondly of the staff in the home and has a very good rapport with his key worker. She has developed a good nurturing relationship with him which he required.' There have been no physical interventions in the home for several years although the staff address any poor behaviour directly with the young people. As a result of the quality of relationships, staff manage difficult behaviour successfully. One social worker commented, 'They are good at holding very frank discussions with very aggressive young people.'

Young people reduce or stop their offending whilst in the home. In addition they gain great insight into the impact their offending has on others. One young person said, 'I like that they listen to you here. What I like about here is that it has given me the chance to make changes for the better.' A social worker said of one young person, 'They have helped him improve in relation to his offending. He now has more insight into his offending and the keyworker sessions have really helped in this. Staff are very persistent in getting their messages over to him. He now can reflect on his behaviour and the impact it has on others.'

Young people work with staff to improve social skills, personal insight and social awareness. Young people enthusiastically join in community activities designed to develop their sense of responsibility for others and an awareness of the disadvantages in society. Young people show great empathy for others and give generously of their time for these activities. Two young people volunteered to assist on Christmas Day at a food bank. One of them commented, 'It might not have been the best Christmas, but it was pretty good.' One parent said, 'In this home they are very experienced. They are getting him to reflect back on what he had at home. This has led him to be more positive about himself. He is much more confident. An example is a simple thing but before he would not use the telephone now he will ring me or will respond to calls. If he has problems he can now talk about them; previously he just created damage.'

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
33 (2001)	ensure that visits in accordance with this regulation occur at least once a month and that a written report on the conduct of the home is sent to HMCI.(Regulation 33(1-5))	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 reviews of the quality of care in the home under Regulation 34 are sent to Ofsted at six-monthly intervals (Children's Act 1989 Regulations and Guidance: Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 3.14)
- ensure that there is a good quality learning and development programme which staff and volunteers are supported to undertake. (NMS18.1)

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*.