

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	31/01/2014
Inspector	Pamela Nuckley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	20/09/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The service is run by an established private provider. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people with attachment disorders.

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**.

At the last inspection, in September 2013, the home was judged to be good. Since then, the home has made satisfactory progress in continuing to improve the quality of care for young people. At the last inspection one recommendation was set to improve practice. This has been addressed. However, three recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection.

The home was asked to ensure that all records are clear and up to date. This was specifically in relation to ensuring that the relevant parties signed all documentation. This has been met. This ensures that all parties know and are in agreement with any plans. Therefore, young people receive consistent care. However, several records use initials for staff and young people without identifying who is who. Therefore, it is difficult to distinguish between them. As a result, the records are not clear. Although this is not currently impacting on young people, it has the potential to do so in the future.

Staff say they are well supported through regular supervision and describe the

manager as fair and approachable. They confirm that when they need support and guidance the manager is available and helpful. However, some staff have not received an appraisal of their practice. As a result, staff have not had their performance formally appraised and this has the potential to impact on their development. Further to this, the deputy manager has some responsibilities in formally supervising staff but has not received any formal training in this area. Therefore, staff are not receiving supervision by an appropriately qualified person.

Young people say this is a good home and that they are happy and safe here. One young person said 'staff are good and they listen to me'. Some young people discussed with the inspector the 'great' Christmas they had and their joy at spending time with their families over this period. This ensures that young people have contact with people who are significant to them. Young people said that they are consulted regularly through several forums. They said that they have the opportunity to discuss activities, menus and plans for the next week in their young people's meetings. Therefore, young people were confident to say that they were fully included in their care.

The home has been through a period of unrest where young people have struggled with issues of bereavement, loss and in controlling their emotions. However, the manager has been proactive in ensuring strategy meetings have taken place to identify solutions and to assess the suitability of placements. As a result, one young person has moved to a teenage placement within the company and extra staffing brought in has allowed young people to have individual time and attention. This has had a positive impact on young people settling and has reduced the need to physically hold young people. Staff are very clear that physical intervention is a last resort and the manager effectively monitors any incidents of restraint.

Staff consistently apply positive and proactive behaviour management strategies. As a result, young people have received additional activities such as, attending the skating academy. Another young person proudly showed the inspector their new school satchel that they received for excellent attendance at school. Therefore, young people are recognising that good behaviour is rewarded.

Young people are looked after by a staff team that are caring and have the young people's best interests at heart. The numbers of staff on duty are ample to meet the needs of young people. The manager has high expectations of the staff team and is proactive in ensuring all staff receive a full training programme to equip them with specific skills relevant to the young people accommodated.

There are various systems to monitor the quality of care given and the operation of the home and young people's views are sought as part of these visits. The manager has systems to monitor, report on and evaluate the administration of the home, to help ensure that any areas of weakness identified are promptly acted upon. Regulation 33 visits by an independent person take place regularly. The home has a development plan in place which includes an improvement agenda. This demonstrates that they want to continue to improve their service and the outcomes for young people in their care.

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 records are clear and up to date. This is specifically in relation to, ensuring that there is a clear system in distinguishing between staff and young people within records (NMS 22)
- ensure that all staff have their performance individually and formally appraised at least annually (NMS 19.6)
- ensure that all staff are provided with regular supervision by appropriately qualified and experienced staff. (NMS 19.4)

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*.