

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	09/01/2013
Inspector	Sandra Jacobs-Walls
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	30/08/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is privately owned. It is a family business with a majority of family members employed within it. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children and young people who have emotional or 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 **good progress**.

This home is currently judged as good overall and is judged to be making good progress at this interim inspection. Outcomes for young people are positive and the home has successfully addressed the two requirements and one recommendation raised at the previous inspection. These related to staff training and the revision of the home's medication policy. The home has made further improvements to its service since the last inspection which demonstrates a commitment and the capacity to continually improve its service provision.

Young people feel safe in their placement and feel that their relationship with the staff group is largely positive; some staff members are more popular with young people than others. Young people live healthy lifestyles and their general health care, medical and emotional needs are well met. Young people have good access to primary and specialist health care services such as GP's, substance misuse and counselling services.

The home pays good attention to the educational needs of young people. Where

young people do not attend school, staff are working diligently to motivate them and secure appropriate educational placements. This is important to ensure young people have access to educational resources that enhance their learning opportunities and educational attainment. Young people have access to a range of leisure activities that they enjoy.

The home has clear behavioural management strategies in place which young people feel are fair. The home operates an incentive and sanctions system to encourage acceptable behaviour. However, some imposed sanctions are not effective in addressing the offending behaviour which, on occasion, young people continue. Managers acknowledge the need to document and review the effectiveness of imposed sanctions in their efforts to encourage acceptable behaviour. Bullying is not an issue for the home and since the last inspection there have been no incidents of staff restraining young people.

Young people are aware of the home's complaints procedure and are able to identify staff they can approach if they are unhappy. Since the last inspection, there have been two complaints made against the service, which staff managed appropriately. Young people feel listened to. Staff proactively seek to engage young people with independent advocates, to ensure their views are effectively shared.

Staff encourage young people to keep to agreed curfews and discourage unauthorised absences. Staff take appropriate action when this occurs and clear records are maintained. The home is welcoming of visitors. Young people and staff are clear about arrangements for contact and the staff group support and adhere to any imposed restrictions.

Young people benefit from staff's co-ordinated approach to care, in particular the effective partnership working between staff and placing authority representatives. Staff have good background knowledge of young people's identified needs at the point of referral; clear and comprehensive information is sought from the local authority. The home's care planning process is robust and thorough. This helps establish placement objectives and enhance placement success.

The staff group are sufficient in numbers, experienced and well trained. Staff have access to relevant and extensive training opportunities. Some of this training, noticeably child protection training is provided by the host local authority. The leadership of the home is strong and there is a commitment to continually improve services offered to young people. So for example, in addressing previously highlighted weaknesses in the home's management of medication, the Registered Manager has sought information from The Royal Pharmaceutical Society. The service has also developed an effective working relationship with the local pharmacist. In recent months, managers have also explored new, creative and innovative ways to engage young people in key work sessions.

The home has good monitoring systems in place. The Registered Manager has introduced increased monitoring of staff practices such as the conduct of key work sessions and the management of medication. This is important to maintain

consistency, effectiveness and good quality care. The home is subject to consistent Regulation 33 monthly monitoring visits. Subsequent monitoring visit reports are detailed and explore all issues as outlined in the Regulations. The service periodically conducts monitoring reports under regulation 34 which is forwarded to Ofsted for review. These monitoring reports are compliant with the regulations and assists the home with its continued development.

The provider demonstrates a commitment to continue to improve the home's service provision. Good progress has been made to enhance the quality of care which acts to impact positively on outcomes for young people.

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
17B (2001)	ensure that written records of sanctions include the effectiveness of the imposed sanction. (Regulation 17B (3)(f))	01/03/2013

Recommendations

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

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*.