

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC029865
Inspection date	10/01/2013
Inspector	Kevin Whatley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	02/08/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home caters for up to three young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is privately owned.

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**.

At the last inspection, carried out in August 2012, the home was judged as adequate. Three recommendations were made on that occasion, these related to the management of bullying, supervision of staff and the availability of drivers. Subsequent to the full inspection an investigation visit took place in October 2012 following a number of concerning notifications received from the home. This visit resulted in two requirements being made regarding care planning and the management of bullying type behaviours. All of the requirements have now been met while the recommendations have been addressed.

The organisation has taken a rigorous approach in addressing the shortfalls identified at the last inspection and investigation visit. This has included the appointment of a new manager and a thorough review of care practices, care planning procedures and risk management processes.

Young people have their challenging and risk-taking behaviours comprehensively addressed leading to vastly improved outcomes. Detailed care planning is in place with agreed strategies in place to manage and reduce the vulnerabilities of young people and the risks they pose to themselves or others. Staff are consistent in

implementing intervention programmes. High levels of staff supervision greatly reduces the opportunities for incidents, such as bullying, to take place. Young people have been assisted to talk together to resolve their differences with staff facilitating reparation meetings leading to a much calmer environment.

Staff are trained in dealing with situations that include violence and aggression and only use restraint as a last resort. Levels of restraint have reduced considerably with de-escalation techniques a guiding principle of practice. The approach towards behaviour management in general is much improved and is assisting young people to keep themselves safer.

Young people say they have made, 'massive improvements' in their behaviour since the last inspection and state that bullying does not occur. Young people who had been exhibiting aggressive behaviours towards each other, including actions that were deemed bullying, have significantly reduced the occasions these occur. Young people say staff have helped them to learn about their anger management and how they deal with the tensions of living together. Young people noted that, 'staff are great' and, 'really understand them.'

The atmosphere of the home was vibrant and despite some challenging and vociferous behaviour, staff provided firm, consistent and appropriate boundaries. It was clear that open and honest communication between young people and staff is a cornerstone of practice with meaningful relationships having developed as a result. Staff have a very good understanding of the specific needs of the young people in their care and are mindful of the group living dynamics. This ensures young people are enabled to learn about themselves and each other and to consider notions of mutual respect and understanding.

Young people have easy access to education with plans put in place to meet their learning needs. The organisation employ peripatetic teaching staff who can provide on-site education to those young people not in mainstream schooling. Despite a programme being in place some young people were reluctant to engage with the teacher during the inspection. Young people acknowledged that they should be attending education but that they were choosing not to on this occasion.

Staff receive a good level of training which they say matches the needs of young people being looked after. Records confirmed that formal supervision takes place regularly with staff noting they receive 'excellent' guidance and support. Records confirmed that at least one member of staff, who can drive the homes vehicle, is working every day; no young person raised this as a concern.

Since the last inspection a new acting manager has been appointed. The acting manager has worked in a senior role in the organisation for many years and was previously registered as manager for the home. She has a wealth of experience and displays a drive and commitment to achieving the best possible outcomes for young people. Her application to be registered as manager for the home has been submitted and is currently being processed.

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*.