

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	31/01/2013
Inspector	Pete Hylton
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	30/07/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home provides short-break care and accommodation for five young people. A local authority owns and operates this setting.

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 was judged to be adequate at the last full inspection in July 2012. Five requirements and four recommendations were made.

The Registered Manager has made improvements to the records kept in the home. A detailed and fully updated central register ensures that young people's stays are clearly recorded. The home's Statement of Purpose is now fully updated with details about the whole staff team. This ensures that parents, carers and placing authorities are made aware of staff working in the home. Staffing files now contain all required information, including evidence that references have been verified to confirm an applicant's suitability. This ensures that only suitable adults are able to work in the home and this further promotes the safety and welfare of young people.

Parents and carers have been sent the home's complaints procedure. This information has been sent in a variety of languages to ensure that this is fully accessible for families where English is not their first language.

The dietary needs of young people are more robustly identified and catered for. As a result of this improvement, young people are able to eat culturally appropriate foods

when they stay at the home. Young people and parents were consulted with about food choices and an event was held to taste different foods. This consultation process enabled the Registered Manager to source appropriate catering supplies for the home. This promotes the individuality of young people and respects their faiths. A parent commented that the staff, '...meet the individual needs of my child really well'.

The Registered Manager has taken appropriate actions to ensure that the five requirements from the last inspection have been fully addressed. Furthermore, the four recommendations have similarly been fully addressed. There has been redecoration to communal areas and bathrooms have been improved with attractive décor and new fittings. As a result, young people benefit from a home that is well maintained, attractive and homely.

Consultation with young people has improved since the last inspection and young people's meetings are more frequently held. Young people's views are actively explored and recorded. The Registered Manager ensures that prompt action is taken to address their views and act on any requests or concerns that they may raise. The staff team ensure that young people are told about the actions taken. This is discussed individually with young people and also displayed in the home. Where young people are not able to share their views through discussion, the staff team use a range of communication methods. For example, young people are able to express their opinions and choices through the use of symbols and other supportive communication methods. As a result, young people know that they are listened to and their contribution to the home is valued and respected.

Regular supervision sessions ensure that all staff are able to share their concerns, ideas for improvement and discuss the progress that young people make. Improved recording practices now ensure that the times of these supervisions are clearly recorded. This ensures that the Registered Manager is able to fully evidence the support given to staff in the home.

The Registered Manager is committed to making further improvements to the service given to young people. For example, care plans have been improved since the last inspection. Young people's tastes, personal care preferences and individual needs are more clearly and robustly recorded. Where young people are able to share their views, these are recorded in these plans. Parents are involved in the plans for their child and the staff team ensure that regular updates are given. A parent commented that they are, 'happy with how the staff care for my child' and 'communication from the staff is very good.'

The staff team are culturally diverse and reflective of the local community. As a result, there is a high level of proficiency in several different languages. This ensures that parents are able to communicate with the staff team about their child's stay at the home. This also means that any concerns, worries or problems are easily communicated to the staff and appropriate action is taken where necessary. A social worker commented, 'parents like the creative approaches to providing care and support.'

Young people's safety is actively promoted in the home. Clear risk management systems are in place and the young people's vulnerabilities are identified and carefully managed. Where young people pose specific risks, the staff team ensure that proportionate actions are taken. For example, where young people have limited road safety awareness, high levels of supervision are in place for trips and outings in the community. As a result, young people are safe and feel safe at the home.

Relationships between young people and staff are positive and it is clear that young people enjoy staying at the home. Complaints from young people are rare and where they do occur, they are sensitively and promptly resolved.

The physical environment is safe and regular checks ensure that any problems are rectified swiftly and appropriately. Regular fire drills ensure that all young people and staff are aware of emergency evacuation procedures. However, the times of these drills are not recorded. As a result, it is not clear if young people have practised fire evacuation outside of normal daylight hours. This has not impacted on the outcomes for young people and a recommendation has been made to improve this area of practice.

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 there is an emergency escape plan that all staff and children are familiar with and have practised so that they know what to do in an emergency. This specifically relates to the recording of the times of fire drills. (NMS 10.9)

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*.