

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC033326
Inspector	Stella Henderson
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Kirklees Council
Registered person address	Kirklees Council 30 Market Street HUDDERSFIELD HD1 2HG
Responsible individual	Paul Johnson
Registered manager	Martin Douglas Steele
Date of last inspection	04/02/2014

Inspection date	24/07/2014
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Previous inspection	inadequate progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	Four compliance notices were issued on 18 February 2014. A monitoring visit took place on 18 March 2014 and all compliance notices had been complied with.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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The home was judged as making inadequate progress in February 2014. A monitoring visit was undertaken in March 2014. This found that the home had successfully complied with requirements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children living there, promote educational achievement, address staffing arrangements and improve the timeliness of notifications to Ofsted.

The home has built on this progress. It now provides very effective quality care for young people. There is a more nurturing atmosphere in the home; staff are motivated and there is a greater focus on 'the child's journey'. This helps young people to bring about change in their lives. As a result young people are experiencing good outcomes and are safe at the home.

Care planning is effective and is undertaken with the involvement of young people. Behaviour is managed much more effectively and although concerns occasionally emerge about bullying, this is dealt with promptly.

Leadership and management are much improved since the last inspection. Leaders and managers have a much better grasp of the conduct of the home and its impact on young people. This helps to demonstrate how the home is making a difference to the lives of young people.

Two requirements are raised in relation to specific aspects of the new regulations. These are procedural matters and have no direct impact on the safety and well-being of young people.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and operated by a local authority. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for six young people who experience behavioural and emotional difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/02/2014	Interim	inadequate progress
02/07/2013	Full	adequate
27/11/2012	Interim	inadequate progress
12/06/2012	Full	adequate

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

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
31 (2001)	review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises at least once each calendar year (Regulation 31)(1A)(b)	31/12/2014
33 (2001)	ensure that the independent visitor forms an opinion as to whether children accommodated at the children's home are effectively safeguarded and the conduct of the children's home promotes the wellbeing of the children accommodated there (Regulation 8)(a)(i)	25/08/2014

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Outcomes for young people are good and they are achieving positive progress in their lives. All are in school or college and the majority have regular attendance. Some already have college placements for September; others are confident about achieving predicted grades to go on to higher education. One young person has realistic ambitions to become a teacher.

One of the strengths of the home is the ability of staff to convey to young people that they are valued and that no one is giving up on them. As a result young people decide to take the risk and put some trust in adults. This helps them engage in what the home has to offer and as a result their lives change for the better. Young people and their parents feel their lives have improved here.

Young people start to feel better about themselves. They begin to appreciate their own self-worth and take pride in their personal appearance. Their emotional well-being improves and they become much better at managing their emotions. This helps young people to make better decisions, such as committing to their education and reducing their involvement in risky and disruptive behaviours. Young people's relationships and contact with family members begin to improve. Those who are at risk of re-offending have not done so. Missing from home incidents have reduced.

Young people develop the confidence to try new things, such as completing a charity walk. This in turn improves their physical health and gives them the opportunity to integrate and feel part of the wider community.

Young people's general health is good and they take steps to ensure it remains so. This includes eating sensible diets, participating in physical activities and keeping up to date with immunisations and routine health checks.

Some young people do run health risks in the long term however by continuing to smoke and experiment with drug use. However there is good work to help young people reduce their dependency on these substances which is beginning to have some impact.

All young people pick up the practical skills they will eventually need for independence by taking responsibility for some household tasks. They are also able to learn how to take responsibility for other things that adults have to deal with, such as negotiating with other agencies, presenting yourself to others sensibly in order to get your view heard and thinking through difficult decisions.

Quality of care**good**

For the majority of the time young people get on well with each other. They sometimes take part in group activities that the home provides, but are respected as individuals who have their own preferences and separate friendship groups. Staff are quick to deal with any issues that arise between young people. This helps to maintain a calm atmosphere for everyone in the home.

Young people say that they feel secure in their relationships with staff. They feel that staff do their best for them and some have particularly nurturing relationships with their key workers. These relationships provide the basis from which young people make good progress, enjoy their achievements and look towards the future.

Staff get to know young people, their background and families well. This helps them to provide the focused and personalised care each young person needs. For some improvement takes place within a very short period of time. An independent reviewing officer (IRO) said some significant work had been undertaken with one young person to repair relationships with their family.

Placement planning and young people's involvement in that process is an area which is much improved. Key working links closely to these objectives. It also focuses on other matters of concern which prevent young people moving on with their lives. This has helped young people improve their attendance in education, improve or maintain their good health and keep themselves safe.

There is very effective work with other agencies to help secure resources to help young people achieve good outcomes. Again, this is an area of real improvement. The challenge to other agencies and professionals to honour their corporate parenting responsibilities towards young people is having real impact.

As a result young people have much more participation in the running of the home and the wider service. For example, they have engaged in activities such as the innovative summer scheme for looked after children which is run by the youth service. Some have interviewed candidates for posts within the local authority.

The home is a well maintained and homely environment which is respected and valued by the young people. Developments are proposed in the surrounding grounds of the property. A requirement is set to ensure that, should demolition and building works begin, the home remains a suitable location for young people to live.

Keeping children and young people safe**good**

Young people are safe at the home and they say they feel safe here. Professionals and parents expressed a clear confidence in the home's ability to keep young people safe. This is because staff develop meaningful relationships with young people. This creates the kind of environment where they can talk about their worries and experiences.

Staff are skilled at identifying emerging risks and safeguarding issues. They successfully intervene to reduce such risks, either through focused key working, effective behaviour management strategies or referral to other professionals. Consequently problematic behaviours such as 'missing from home' incidents are diminishing. Young people at risk of re-offending are choosing not to do so.

Safeguarding measures are strengthened by better matching of placements to the home. There is better analysis of whether the home can meet the individual's needs. This ensures that they will benefit from living there and that young people already placed will not be adversely affected.

The more frequent presence of other professionals in the home and young people's greater engagement in corporate activities also contributes to their safety. It ensures that young people have a high profile within the local authority. It also provides opportunities for external professionals to see that young people are safe.

Young people live in a safe environment. They are protected with established recruitment processes. Visitors are checked, vetted and monitored. The house is safe and secure, health and safety checks are an integral part of the daily running of the home.

Leadership and management

good

The Registered Manager has managed this home for several years. He has social work and management qualifications. He and senior management have ensured that the compliance notices issued in February 2014 have been met in full. This shows capacity for further positive change. It has improved the safety of young people and improved their educational outcomes.

Staffing arrangements have been effectively addressed. New staff have been employed who have skills that enhance opportunities for young people's engagement in activities outside of the home. Notifications are now submitted to Ofsted in a more timely fashion. This ensures that young people's safety is well managed and promptly responded to.

Recommendations were also raised at the last inspection in relation to care planning documentation. These are all now in place and staff now have access to electronic recording systems. This enables staff to fully understand young people's needs and situations.

Staff report that they receive the support and supervision they need to meet young people's needs. They keep up to date with training and research, such as the impact of early neglect on children. All staff have either achieved their required child care qualifications or are on track to doing so. This helps to promote good and safe standards of care for young people.

The Registered Manager effectively monitors the activity of the home, identifying areas where the quality of care for young people can be improved. Scrutiny of the conduct of the home and safeguarding arrangements by the independent visitor continues to be analytic and supportive. However the reporting format does not full comply with the new regulations. This is a procedural matter which has no impact on the safety or well-being of young people.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information 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 main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.