

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	07/12/2011
Inspector	Steve Pearson
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	02/08/2011
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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 (March 2011)*.

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.

Service information

Brief description of the service

The children's home is provided by a charitable organisation and cares for up to eight young people of either gender aged 10 to 17 years old. It is registered to care for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Progress

Since their previous inspection the service is judged to be making **satisfactory** progress.

At the previous inspection on 3 August 2011, Ofsted made one recommendation and judged the overall effectiveness of the home as good. The recommendation was that young people should have a say in decisions about who is recruited to work at the home.

The current inspection assessed whether the recommendation had been met. It also assessed what the young people, Registered Manager and staff said about any changes that had taken place. The records of young people's house meetings and quality monitoring reports were also assessed.

Since the previous inspection, young people have helped to interview new members of staff and their opinions have helped to influence recruitment decisions. This means the procedures are more inclusive and effective. Young people also feel valued and involved in what happens in their home.

Other improvements have taken place since the last inspection. For example, a member of staff and each young person meet once a week to decide a plan for the following week. This includes dates of appointments and other forthcoming events. This gives young people greater clarity about important issues for the week ahead and helps them feel more settled and secure.

At the previous inspection, outcomes associated with education and health were extremely positive. These outcomes are not quite so positive now. However, the home has sought and obtained support from the local authority's virtual headteacher who provides on-line support to young people who are struggling with their education. The Registered Manager and staff continue to work hard with all young people to address these issues.

Young people's house meetings are held every week and the staff record the minutes. A new format has been introduced to help ensure that issues from the previous meeting are considered at the next meeting. However, it is often unclear what action is to be taken as a result of the issues young people raise. There is only partial evidence to show that issues they bring up are then acted upon.

An external person visits the home once a month to assess the quality of care. They assess all the relevant issues and gather information from a wide range of sources such as discussions with young people, their parents or relatives and the staff. The visitor then makes any necessary recommendations within their assessment report. However, the home is not always meeting these recommendations and so some are having to be repeated in consecutive reports. The Registered Manager also formally monitors the quality of care and addresses shortfalls. Although the monitoring report is overdue for submission to Ofsted, the Registered Manager is about to send it in.