

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	27/11/2012
Inspector	Dennis Bradley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	13/08/2012
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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 aged 10 to 17 years old. It is registered to care for young people with emotional and 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 **satisfactory progress**.

The home was judged to be good at the last full inspection. Since then young people continue to make good progress from their starting points when they first moved into the home. For example, they are all successfully attending education or training placements, which will help them to reach their potential and achieve economic well-being. A young person said that staff help them understand what they want to achieve in the future. The young people also benefit from participating in a wide range of activities including voluntary work within the local community. This enables them to pursue their individual interests and helps them gain confidence in their abilities and builds their self-esteem. Young people are also learning and developing their independence skills to help them make a smooth transition to adulthood.

Young people have good opportunities to participate in decisions about their day-to-day lives and future. For example, young people are actively involved in reviewing the care and support they receive. There are also regular group meetings where they are encouraged and supported to have their say about how the home is run and to identify any improvements that could be made. Young people know they are listened

to and this helps them feel valued and included. Young people have positive relationships with staff and generally get on well together. Group living helps them develop their social skills. Evening meals are taken together and are social occasions where staff and young people have the opportunity to talk about day-to-day events, and spend quality time with each other.

The manager has been in post for less than a month but they have already made changes to improve the service. For example, team meetings now include time for staff to focus on specific aspects of the national minimum standards. This helps staff develop a better understanding of the standards and how to promote good outcomes for young people.

Four recommendations were made at the last inspection. However, only one of these has been addressed satisfactorily. Staff now record the whereabouts of young people that return from being missing in the missing person log. This helps staff determine whether the young person is running away to a specific location or to specific people, and what action can be taken to prevent them going missing again. The frequency young people go missing has significantly reduced since the last inspection.

Action has been taken to try to address the other three recommendations, but this has not been satisfactory. Records of incidents where staff have used physical restraint on young people still do not always contain the all required information. For example, they do not always say whether the young person concerned was given the opportunity to be examined by a registered nurse or medical practitioner. Not recording such essential information makes it more difficult for the registered person to effectively monitor such incidents to ensure appropriate action has been taken. The provider has an external quality monitoring programme that involves monthly visits to the home. However, these visits do not always include consultation with parents or relatives of the young people living at the home. This means that parents and relatives are not regularly involved in contributing to monitoring the operation of the home. A recommendation relating to the records of statutory reviews of young people living at the home has also not been addressed. Not all of the records of reviews are available in the home. This means, for example, that the individuals who are specifically accountable for carrying out tasks agreed at the review are not always clearly identified.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- review the home's written restraint records to ensure they comply fully with national minimum standards (NMS 3.16 and 3.17)
- ensure that the results of all statutory reviews are retained on the young person's file (NMS 25.8)

- ensure that, during every visit, the person carrying out the visits under Regulation 33 speaks in private with the parents or relatives of young people living at the home. (NMS 21.7)

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*.