

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC033657
Inspection date	20/01/2014
Inspector	Simon Morley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	21/08/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is operated by a local authority. It provides care and accommodation for five young people of 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 **inadequate progress**.

The last full inspection of the home was on 21 August 2013. The overall effectiveness at that time was judged to be good. The home was also judged good for outcomes for young people, the quality of care, safeguarding and leadership and management. There were two recommendations. One was to improve practice with regard to improving how well young people are safeguarded when they are absent or missing from the home. The second was in relation to ensuring risk assessments covered all aspects of potential risk to young people with strategies in place to remove or reduce risks as far as possible. Both recommendations were only partially met and additional shortfalls were identified at this inspection. As a result the progress made is judged to be inadequate.

A number of young people have moved into the home since the last inspection. Staff have supported young people to make some progress since their admission. Young people make progress with improving their behaviour and staff are developing a restorative practice approach. This encourages young people to consider the impact of their behaviour on others. Staff use this to effectively tackle any kind of bullying, including name calling, and support young people to interact positively with each

other.

Young people have a say in what happens in the home and their day-to-day care. They are involved in developing their individual plans and have regular one-to-one discussions with staff about their needs and the progress they are making. This helps young people to build relationships with staff and start to make improvements in their lives. Staff use monthly action plans to support young people's individual needs and complete evaluation reports to track young people's progress and review the support they need. However the existing evaluation reports, and their focus on outcomes young people have achieved, are weak. This limits how well young people are supported to achieve.

Staff consistently and proactively encourage young people to pursue an education. Educational progress varies depending on young people's needs and their starting points on admission. When there have been issues with non-attendance, staff continue to support young people to resume their education and continue their learning.

Young people have reduced their risk-taking behaviour, in particular where there has been a past history of missing from home. For example young people now keep in contact with staff when they are absent or missing from the home. Staff encourage regular contact to help ensure young people are safe and return to the home safely. However staff practice does not consistently include searching for young people or checking on their welfare when there is information about young people's whereabouts. Missing from home risk assessments do not clearly distinguish between missing or unauthorised absences. These risk assessments do not include all the relevant information about the risks of young person's being exploited. The manager does liaise with other agencies, including the police and placing authorities, about the risks to young people when they are staying away from the home in order to try ensure they are safe. Young people do return to the home safely when they have been absent or missing but the shortfalls identified compromise the effectiveness of staff in safeguarding young people absent or missing from the home.

The quality of monitoring by the registered provider is adequate but reports provide little analysis of the quality of career evaluation of how well young people enjoy and achieve. There is also a conflict of interest between the management of the home and these monitoring arrangements. This impacts on the ability of the registered provider to improve the leadership and management of the home. Monitoring reports have not been sent to Ofsted on a monthly basis as required.

Staffing levels have on rare occasions been bolstered with agency staff. Practice in regard to ensuring there are suitable checks and vetting of agency staff are not consistent. On this occasion this has not impacted on the safety of young people.

There are eight areas identified for further improvement in relation to records of checks of agency staff, the registered provider's monitoring, staff practice for young people missing from the home and developing the evaluation of young people's progress.

Areas for improvement

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
26 (2001)	ensure that for all staff who work at the home full and satisfactory information is available in respect of each of the matters specified in Schedule 2 (Regulation 26 (3) and Schedule 2)	28/03/2014
29 (2001)	maintain in the children's home the records specified in Schedule 4 and ensure that they are kept up to date, this relates particularly to agency staff (Regulation 29 (1) and Schedule 4)	28/03/2014
33 (2001)	ensure that where the home is visited in accordance with this regulation by an employee of the organisation or partnership who is not directly concerned with the conduct of the home those visits are not compromised by the management arrangements of the home (Regulation 33 (1) and (2))	28/03/2014
33 (2001)	ensure visits under paragraph (1) or (2) shall take place once a month and the registered provider shall provide a copy of the report to be made under paragraph (4) (c) to Ofsted (Regulation 33 (3) and (5)(a))	28/03/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure staff actively search for all children who are missing, including working with police where appropriate (NMS 5.5)
- ensure children who go missing are protected as far as possible, in particular review children's individual risk assessments on going missing with regard to their vulnerability and the effective use of Runaway and Missing from Home and Care protocols the local police make sure children are appropriately categorised as missing (NMS 5)
- ensure that visits to the home carried out under Regulation 33 scrutinise how the home is supporting children to enjoy and achieve. (Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations, Volume 5: Children's Homes, paragraph 3.12)
- ensure each child's Placement Plan is monitored in order to ensure that the

requirements of the plan are implemented in the day-to-day care of that child, in particular by further developing monthly action plans, progress and evaluation reports to be able to clearly and fully track the progress children make and be able to fully implement their placement plans (NMS 25.2)

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*.