

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC034301
Inspection date	13/03/2013
Inspector	Peter Harrell
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	07/11/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is one of a number of children's homes operated by a local authority. The home provides care and accommodation for five young people who may be experiencing emotional or 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 **good progress**.

The overall effectiveness of the service was judged as providing an adequate level of care for young people, at the last inspection on 7th November 2012. The service has addressed the three requirements and eight recommendations which were raised at that inspection. The home demonstrates improvement in the quality of care and outcomes for children and young people. Young people's welfare is enhanced by the positive relationships which exist between the staff and the children and young people they care for.

As a consequence of this interim inspection, two recommendations are raised.

Since the last inspection, there are improvements in the physical condition of the home. There has been a considerable reduction in the incidents of restraint with two incidents since the last inspection, compared to 13 at the previous visit. Records of physical restraint are more detailed which affords better protection to young people. For example, it is recorded that young people are given the opportunity to be medically examined following a physical restraint and that they offered the opportunity to discuss any incidents with a member of staff. Staff receive regular

training updates on restraint and behaviour management techniques. This ensures that young people are managed safely during incidents..

Staff supervision and appraisals take place on a regular basis. Staff and managers at the home are aware of their duty to record any notifiable events in detail with copies being sent to Ofsted and other relevant authorities without any delay.

A new, more rigorous, comprehensive and safer recording system of staff recruitment checks has been implemented by the Registered Manager. Although no new staff have been recruited, a full audit has been completed of all the information held on the files of existing staff. A checklist on each file now shows the recruitment checks that have been completed, such as references. Additional references have been requested and verified by telephone for those staff for whom two references had not previously been sought. These safer recruitment practices ensure that there is a more consistent and robust approach to prevent unsuitable people from being recruited to work at the home.

A young person has translated the children's guide to the home into several languages. This demonstrates good practice and shows improved levels of consultation and involvement with young people. However, not all records of key-work sessions are signed by young people or their comments included. Although this does not directly impact on the care that young people receive, their views are not fully represented.

A lack of clarity about the future plans for some young people increases their anxiety and results in incidents of challenging behaviour. Individual staff members are aware of these issues, although there has not been the opportunity for the staff team to meet as a group to discuss and reflect upon the current situation.

There is a strong commitment from staff at the home to provide a service which benefits children and young people. Staff are supported by a manager who has a strong child-centred focus. There remains a stable staff team at the home. Staff are positive role models and are enthusiastic about improving young people's outcomes and the quality of care they receive.

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 the home regularly reviews incidents of challenging behaviour, examines trends or issues emerging from this, to enable staff to reflect and learn to inform future practice. In particular that staff meetings take place more regularly to enable staff to discuss and agree strategies for managing behaviour (NMS 3.21)
- ensure young people are actively encouraged to read their files and add personal

statements. (NMS 22.5)

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*.