

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC034301
Inspector	Clare Davies
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Bristol City Council
Registered person address	Bristol City Council, Director of Legal Services City Hall, College Green BRISTOL BS1 5TR
Responsible individual	Karen Mary Gazzard
Registered manager	Emma Carole Hood
Date of last inspection	24/10/2014

Inspection date	20/02/2015
Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	None.

This inspection

This home was judged adequate at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

The manager and staff team have addressed the three requirements and the three recommendations that were raised at the previous inspection. Since that time the group of young people has remained the same, contributing to the settled environment. Minimal changes to the staff team ensure that young people benefit from this stability with clear structure and routines. Although young people have remained settled in this home they each have clear plans and for some this means moving on to alternative placements. Young people are fully involved in their care plans and are supported with preparation for such transitions, through visits and discussions. Preparation for leaving is sensitively managed to promote a positive ending to each placement.

Concerns about severe bullying identified at the previous inspection are no longer present in this children's home. The current group of young people report occasional disagreements and fall out amongst each other. However, they generally tolerate each other and learn to get on well within group living. Young people are confident that the staff will sort things out and deal with any bullying behaviour. Regular house meetings and individual time with key workers provide opportunities for young people to raise any worries or concerns. In fact, the strength of relationships with the manager and staff team ensure that young people can readily speak up about any difficulties.

The manager has gathered material from 'outstanding' providers and schools to select best practice to bring together in a policy for the prevention of bullying specific to this home. Team days provide an opportunity for the manager and staff to consider such areas of development. The staff team benefit from team days and training events to update their skills and develop their professional practice. Since the previous inspection, training has provided an increased awareness of child sexual exploitation and safeguarding of vulnerable young people. Any safeguarding

concerns are dealt with appropriately and reported to other agencies.

The local authority has developed the missing child policy though this has yet to be ratified and distributed. Within the home the procedures are clear to follow if a young person fails to return at an agreed time or when their whereabouts are unknown. Comprehensive risk assessments are regularly updated and categorised according to the level of risk, indicated through a red, amber or green rating. These documents provide a very good summary of each young person and how to support them in reducing known risks. Young people feel safe and have a sense of belonging to this home. This is evident as there have been no incidents of young people missing since the last inspection.

When presented with challenging behaviour, the manager and staff provide consistent responses to deal with incidents. Effective use of de-escalation skills and sound knowledge of young people lead to matters being resolved without the need to physically intervene. There is an improved recording system for physical intervention. A bound book of pre-printed pages captures the required information to meet regulations. This record is further improved by having a body map and a de-brief section to complete after the intervention. There has only been one incident that has required this level of behaviour management since the last inspection.

The manager and staff team have maintained their effective links with statutory agencies and voluntary groups to deliver targeted services to young people. This joint working enables young people to receive additional support outside of the home in relation to their sexual health, drug use, education, mental health and risks of sexual exploitation. Consultation with the police has assisted the manager to assess the risks posed within the locality and incorporate in the community risk assessment.

The recently installed new kitchen is welcomed by all and now requires some finishing touches such as window blinds and seat covers. The house is generally in good decorative order with a redecoration plan in place. To showcase the home and welcome any new young people there are plans for young people to make a DVD to support the welcome pack and those young people with an interest in music are keen to produce an audio version. As spring approaches there are plans to attend to the vegetable patch and decide what to grow this year. These aspects contribute to a pleasant and comfortable environment for young people to live in.

Effective monitoring of the quality of care enables the manager to have a good grasp of the strengths of this home and areas for development. The local authority struggled to appoint an independent visitor for two months; however, this has now been resolved. The manager attends a management group to review forthcoming changes to regulations and prepare for their implementation. This will support this home in maintaining compliance and help the manager and staff to have a good understanding of new legislation and practice developments.

One recommendation from this inspection is made in relation to record keeping. Monthly care summaries are sufficient in quality as completed by key workers. Where these records are stored electronically, there are different systems in use for how and where they are stored. This leads to confusion when trying to retrieve electronic records. Therefore, a procedure is required for all staff to follow consistently. This shortfall has minimal impact on the quality of care delivered to young people.

Information about this children's home

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

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/10/2014	Full	adequate
05/02/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
25/07/2013	Full	good
13/03/2013	Interim	good progress

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

Recommendations

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

- ensure that staff understand the nature of records maintained and follow the home's policy for the keeping and retention of files, managing confidential information and access to files (including files removed from the premises). (NMS 22.1)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

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.