

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	31/01/2012
Inspector	Nicholas Murphy
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	26/10/2011
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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 home provides care and accommodation for up to 5 young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is provided by a local authority.

Progress

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

At the full inspection on 5 October 2011 the children's home was judged to be good. Both requirements made at the last inspection have been addressed. The home has improved the recording and evaluation of sanctions, which means that staff and young people can be clearer about the effectiveness of any sanction. The external monitoring process now includes consultation with parents. This helps the manager and staff arrive at a more informed opinion about quality of care in the home and where improvements might be made.

Three of the four recommendations made have also been addressed. Practice in relation to searching young people's rooms has been improved so that young people are informed every time this has happened even when they are away from the home. The manager now ensures that staff are fully aware of the findings of his monthly monitoring of the home. This helps staff to understand more clearly the strengths of the home and areas for development. In addition, the physical condition of the home has been improved, with new carpets, extensive redecoration, and new equipment such as a wide screen television. There are also firm plans now in place to renovate the bathrooms. Given the relatively short timescale between the last inspection and this, these are commendable improvements which will enhance the comfort and homeliness of the home and provide young people with a high standard of accommodation. The recommendation to revise placement plans to make them more specific has not yet been fully addressed, but the manager has spent time drafting a new format which he intends to implement shortly. This recommendation has therefore been repeated.

Staff have involved the young people at all stages of the refurbishment programme in the home. Young people's choices for decoration, furnishings, and layout of the living spaces have been fully considered and acted upon. Staff clearly respect and value the opinions of young people and ensure that they are fully involved in all decision making within the home. Young people have also assisted in carrying out some of the decorating, which has not only promoted their sense of belonging but also given them valuable skills of use in later life.

All young people are progressing well and are being supported to achieve good outcomes in terms of education and training, health, and contact with families. This is due to the efforts of staff in working individually with young people to progress

their plans. Work such as this is done in a methodical way which takes account of each young person's particular needs. For example, some young people are particularly able and determined in seeking employment and need little more than practical assistance from staff to succeed. Others need more emotional support to help them in making the transition to independence. One young person has taken a course of driving lessons which has given them confidence in their ability to achieve and will enhance their employability.

Other work with some of the older young people has focused on where they will live when they leave the home. Potential accommodation options are explored in full consultation with young people and, where appropriate, their parents. This ensures that young people can move into accommodation which meets their needs in terms of support from friends, family and community, and be close to their employment or training venue.

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 each child's placement plan is monitored by a key worker within the home who ensures that the requirements of the plan are implemented in the day-to-day care of that child. (NMS 25.2)