

## Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC035154         |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 10/02/2014       |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Stella Henderson |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Interim          |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home  |

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|--------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 21/05/2013 |
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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

The children's home is provided by a local authority. It is registered to provide care for up to five young people of either gender, who may have emotional or behavioural difficulties.

### The inspection judgements and what they mean

|                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Good progress</b>         | 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. |
| <b>Satisfactory progress</b> | 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.                                  |
| <b>Inadequate progress</b>   | 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**.

At the last full inspection in May 2013 the home's overall effectiveness was judged to be good. Since then some young people have continued to do well at school and have ambitions to go on to sixth form. Others are engaged in apprenticeships. Some young people continue to enjoy a range of activities such as boxing and running. Several young people have successfully moved on to independence. Young people who have more recently arrived at the home have seen varying levels of improvement to their health, education and relationships with family. A requirement to improve consultation around monitoring has been met which means that young people's views are more consistently taken into account.

However, this interim inspection finds the home to be making inadequate progress. Recommendations from the last inspection have not been met and a number of new concerns have emerged which impact on the safety and well-being of young people.

For example, arrangements do not always support staff during times of disruption in the home. Police have been called to the home on a number of occasions. These

incidents include sexual bullying towards other young people, racial abuse, threats to and actual assault on staff, arson and other damage to the home. Not enough forward planning has been given to the deployment of staff in order to better manage young people and forestall such incidents. On occasion this has led to staff having to seek assistance from another children's home. This has led to young people feeling unsafe in their own home.

Young people are not adequately safeguarded after these incidents. One young person commented that there are times when they do not feel safe at the home. The response to one safeguarding incident was to issue the young person with a panic alarm. Conditions which may be symptomatic of underlying anxieties, such as enuresis, which have emerged following these incidents, are not recorded or fully explored. This means young people do not receive the help and support they need to address these matters.

Young people are not sufficiently prepared by staff to move on to independent living. Staff have been alert to young people struggling to master practical tasks and have stepped in to provide additional support. However no clear objectives have been set to enable young people to develop these skills. An action in one young person's placement plan to monitor this progress has not been achieved.

The manager has not ensured that notifications are sent to Ofsted without delay. This means the regulator is unable to swiftly assess whether actions taken by the home in response to incidents is effective. This also prevents the regulator from taking action to safeguard and reduce the risk to young people.

Independent scrutiny of the home is not effective where notifiable incidents are concerned. One report notes that there have been 'no notifications' at times when subsequent information has confirmed that these occurred. The format for recording is confusing, and does not make clear whether such events have taken place or not. This calls into question the extent to which young people can be safeguarded and protected by the independent review of the home. It may also give a misleading picture of the conduct of the home to the provider and the regulator.

The provider has failed to notify Ofsted about a change in the identity of the Responsible Individual. This means that young people may be unaware of who to contact if they want to speak to someone external to the home.

The manager has failed to meet three recommendations set at the last inspection. These include ensuring that young people communicate their views on all aspects of their care and support, particularly towards placement planning. Staff are still not ensuring that young people's views are clearly represented in these documents. This means that the opportunity to deliver individualised care is compromised.

A second recommendation to ensure that records are clear, up to date, stored securely and contribute to an understanding of the child's life has not been achieved. Important conversations between the manager, staff and young people are not consistently recorded. This makes it difficult for young people to know that any

concerns they may have or difficulties they are experiencing are clearly highlighted for action.

The manager has not ensured that each child's placement plan and 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. As a result young people have not been able to gain the skills they require to prepare for independence.

These recommendations are re-iterated as a result of this inspection. Further requirements and recommendations are also set to enable the provider to address the concerns highlighted in this report and drive forward further improvement.

## 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   |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 11<br>(2001) | promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated there and for the care, education, supervision, support and, where appropriate treatment of children accommodated there (Regulation 11)(1)(a)(b) *                             | 04/03/2014 |
| 30<br>(2001) | ensure that if, in relation to a children's home, any of the events listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 5 takes place the registered person shall without delay notify the persons indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table (Regulation 30)(1) * | 04/03/2014 |
| 33<br>(2001) | improve the quality of the written report on the conduct of the home (Regulation 33)(4)(c) *                                                                                                                                                                               | 04/03/2014 |
| 38<br>(2001) | ensure that the registered person shall give notice in writing to HMCI as soon as it is practicable to do so if there is any change in the identity of the responsible individual (Regulation 38)(e)(iii) *                                                                | 04/03/2014 |

\*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice

### Recommendations

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

- ensure that all children communicate their views on all aspects of their care and support (NMS 1.3)

- ensure that children receive care which helps them to prepare for and supports them into adulthood, so that they can reach their potential and achieve economic well-being. This is with specific reference to points (a) to (g) (NMS 12.1)(a-g)
- ensure that the overall number, competence and deployment of staff, both as a staff group and on individual shifts, can fulfil the home's Statement of Purpose and meet the individual needs of all children resident at the home. This is with specific reference to the deployment of staff (NMS 17.1)
- ensure that records are clear, up to date, stored securely and contribute to an understanding of the child's life (NMS 22)
- improve the quality and each child's placement plan and ensure it 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)

## 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*.