

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035154
Inspection date	15/01/2013
Inspector	Jacqueline Malcolm
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	07/08/2012
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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

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 **satisfactory progress**.

The home was judged to be good overall at the last full inspection in August 2012. A number of requirements and recommendations were raised at that inspection to promote improvement.

A senior management decision has been made to deploy the majority of the staff team to other children's homes by March 2013. Young people openly express anger, resentment and feel let down by the decision. They say that they do not feel that their wishes and feelings have been fully considered and they do not feel consulted by senior management. Comments made by young people include: 'I don't feel safe enough to live here now that they are taking the staff away'; 'we've got used to our staff, something has been torn away from us'; 'I am livid about the decision made' and 'I don't understand the decision'. The views expressed by young people do not support respect for their wishes and feelings. Complaints made by some young people regarding this issue are being investigated.

The home has improved the safety and welfare outcomes for young people by

satisfactorily addressing the requirements and most of the recommendations. Outcomes and quality of care for young people are enhanced as a result of these improvements. For example, the complaints policy now makes clear the arrangements relating to complaints about the registered person. Young people benefit from the improved missing-from-home policy and protocol. These arrangements ensure safer, transparent practices.

Young people are cared for in line with their placement plans. Significant issues are communicated to young people's independent reviewing officers, keeping them informed about their progress and development. Most young people who are eligible for a pathway plan have one. They also have an allocated worker. Young people who have pathway plans pending are fully engaged in independence plans which are developed with good support from staff. Young people are making good progress to develop the skills to support themselves when they move on.

Young people live in a clean and homely environment that meets their diverse needs. Repairs are promptly addressed, which contributes to a well maintained home.

The reports following Regulation 33 visits are regularly submitted to Ofsted. This enables Ofsted to monitor how the home improves young people's outcomes and quality of care.

However, the Statement of Purpose does not include up-to-date information about the responsible individual. The numbers and ages of young people that the home can accommodate are not recorded clearly. These shortfalls do not accurately inform stakeholders about the home. Significant events involving young people and their outcomes are not routinely notified to Ofsted. This impedes Ofsted's role to fulfil its regulatory duties.

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 (2001)	promote and make proper provision for the welfare of children accommodated there; in particular demonstrate how children's views, wishes and feelings are taken into account regarding the staff changes in the home (Regulation 11 (1)(a))	15/02/2013
30 (2001)	ensure that, in relation to the children's home, if any of the events listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 5 takes place, the registered person without delay notifies the persons indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table, in particular serious illness/accident sustained by a child.	15/02/2013

	(Regulation 30 (1))	
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Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home has a clear Statement of Purpose which is available to and understood by staff and children and reflected in any policies, procedures and guidance. In particular, amend the responsible individual's details, the age and numbers of children who may be accommodated at the home. (NMS 13.1)

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*.