

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	23/01/2014
Inspector	Bill Drumm
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	06/08/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This local authority children's home provides care and accommodation for up to three children. It is registered to care for young people whose main needs arise from 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**.

At the last inspection in August 2013, the overall effectiveness rating of the home was adequate. The home has made good progress since the last inspection and young people remain well-cared for and safe. Two young people seen at the time of the inspection appeared very happy. They spoke confidently with both staff and visitors. One young person was happy sharing personal photographs and talking whilst the other young person enjoyed showing off their skill on an electronic game. The home also has a new Registered Manager in post.

Two requirements and three recommendations were made at the last inspection and all have been fully met. The first requirement was to promote the educational achievement of the young people living in the home and to ensure they make use of educational facilities appropriate to their age, aptitude, needs and interests. The home's manager went with the young person into school and observed their behaviour and how they get on with other young people. Steps were then taken to help the young person with their education and 1:1 support was provided. The young person's attendance at school is excellent and they are making steady progress in line with their level of ability. The young person's social skills are also

improving and they often play out with other young people who live nearby.

The second requirement was to ensure that any disabled child accommodated in the home is provided with any aids and equipment they may need in order to facilitate communication with others. The home's manager has purchased a range of different books that help young people to express their feelings and to understand their emotions. The home's manager is also looking to buy a 'feelings jar' and a 'conversation cube' which will be used in young people's meetings to encourage conversation and discussion. This will help young people to feel listened to.

One recommendation was to ensure that each young person's placement plan is monitored by a key-worker within the home to ensure that the requirements of the plan are implemented in the day-to-day care of the child. The home's manager has through staff training sessions, team meetings and individual supervision sessions reminded staff of the importance of keeping placement plans up to date and what the role of the key-worker is in that process. This means that the needs of young people are monitored regularly, changing needs are highlighted and services adapted to meet those changing needs.

The second recommendation was to ensure that each young person is visited by their social worker at the frequency expected by regulations. The home's manager has informed social workers of the level of support she expects young people in the home to get from them and has reminded them of their responsibilities with regard to statutory visits. Young people are now visited regularly by their social workers and they receive good support.

The final recommendation was for the home's manager to write a development plan for the future of the home. This has been done. Staff know what the strengths and weaknesses of the home are and what progress they wish to make over the coming months.

The home has made further progress in a number of areas. The Statement of Purpose has been comprehensively reviewed and the role and function of the home has changed significantly. The home now provides a therapeutic, nurturing environment specifically to younger children. A new staff team has been appointed and all staff is having training to carry out their new roles and responsibilities. Staff work more closely with colleagues in the fostering teams, to ensure long term family placements are sought for each child.

The young people's guide has also been reviewed. The guides are now more personal to each young person and include essential information that they need to know. They are written in plain English and the content is enhanced by having photographs and statements from the young person's favourite pop stars or celebrities. This makes the document more interesting to read and more easily understood.

The home's manager has also developed a link with another children's home in the

local area that provides care and attention to younger children. This will enable both homes to share good practice and to improve outcomes for young people.

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*.