

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035380
Inspection date	06/01/2014
Inspector	Steve Pearson
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	26/09/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The children's home provides short-break care and accommodation for up to six young people. The home is run by a local authority and is registered to care for young people with learning disabilities.

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**.

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At the previous inspection Ofsted judged that the overall effectiveness of the home was adequate and made four requirements and four recommendations. The home has now addressed the shortfalls and the quality of care has improved. Consequently, Ofsted is able to monitor any significant concerns that may arise as the home is now aware of all the significant events that require notification to the regulator. Management arrangements have improved significantly because the home has now filled the vacant posts of assistant manager and senior residential care worker. The staff are now more able to be clear about children's needs. This is because outcomes from their reviews are now recorded immediately in their case file and care plans are now more detailed. The support for the staff has also improved because all temporary staff now receive regular, formal supervision and annual appraisals from their line manager.

Other aspects of care provision have also improved since the previous inspection. Young people now have a greater say in the running of the home. For example,

three young people have been appointed as 'activity officers'. Their role is to help suggest and organise leisure activities for the other young people in the home. They also suggested that the home should also have clocks that are easier to read and the Registered Manager has arranged for these to be installed. There are regular meetings for young people which are organised to ensure that each child has the opportunity to attend at least once over a specific period of time. This ensures that every young person has the opportunity to express their views in a house meeting. A member of staff chairs these meetings. They record what young people say and any actions that need to be followed up. The Registered Manager and staff then carry out the actions and they are always discussed at the next meeting to ensure progress has been made. Young people also make effective use of a 'post-box' system. This enables them make requests in writing to the Registered Manager and they are guaranteed a written reply. One young person, for example, gained a positive outcome as a result of a request they made to the Registered Manager using this system.

Staff morale has improved since the previous inspection. The staff are enjoying extra responsibilities that have been delegated to them. There is a clearer sense of direction and development now that the management vacancies have been filled. Young people have also made significant progress in acquiring skills which will be helpful when they are adults. For example, some young people have made significant progress in improving their personal hygiene. This has been achieved because the home now has a three-stage life skills programme which helps young people to gain important independence skills. The staff assess the abilities of the young people and discuss which programme is appropriate.

The home now has two Registered Managers as one is currently absent due to long term sickness. The Registered Manager currently managing the home has a level three qualification in caring for young people. The management position requires a level five qualification. It is important to gain the higher qualification to ensure they have the appropriate skills and knowledge necessary for the management position.

There were no children present during the inspection.

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 the Registered Manager gains the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's Services. (NMS 14.2)

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*.