

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	11/03/2014
Inspector	Steve Pearson
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	13/08/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The children's home is provided by a local authority and is registered to care for up to six young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties. The home aims to provide short to medium term care.

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**.

At the previous inspection Ofsted judged that the overall effectiveness of the home was good and made two requirements. The shortfalls have now been addressed. As a result the arrangements in place for recording any restraints are now more robust because they provide more accountability.

Overall, young people progress well. The home employs a full-time education coordinator who is successful in ensuring young people attend and achieve in education. Education attendance levels are good. Compared to before they came to live here, all young people have at least similar attendance levels but most have improved. One young person summed this up saying, 'I'm doing better in education than before I came to live here.'

There has been some offending behaviour since the previous inspection but this is not widespread across the group of young people. Most young people have improved their behaviour since admission to the home. For example, one young person said, 'I'm more calm since I came here. I don't get into trouble now.'

The staff are successful in helping young people to develop social skills and become more confident. They are also successful in helping them to gain skills that will be useful when older and living independently.

Management arrangements are not fully robust. The Registered Manager has left their full-time post to take on a secondment elsewhere. The secondment was foreseeable but the acting manager appointed to cover for them has not yet submitted their registration application to Ofsted. The acting manager has completed their registration documentation and, in line with Ofsted guidance, they are awaiting the outcome of final checks before submitting the application. The management demands of the home are significant given its size and purpose. The potential impact of not having a full-time Registered Manager in place is therefore more significant.

There is a lack of evidence that temporary staff have received appropriate induction training. This is important as it helps to ensure the staff have the necessary skills and knowledge for their work with young people. The Registered Manager holds development days with the team of staff from time to time. These events are successful in bringing new knowledge to the team and in helping them develop their practice.

The monitoring of the quality of care is sound. In accordance with legislation, an external visitor calls at the home once a month to evaluate how well young people are being cared for. They also evaluate whether there are any causes for concern regarding young people's behaviour. The visitor checks all the necessary issues; they seek the views of all relevant people and they make recommendations where necessary. They check these recommendations at the next visit. This provides a robust capacity for continuous improvement. The Registered Manager also formally monitors the quality of care and sends Ofsted a report in accordance with legislation.

Young people also have a direct say in how the home is run. They have regular discussions with their key worker and with the staff and Registered Manager. The staff also arrange a monthly house meeting which the young people attend and offer their views about the home. The staff record their views and actions to be taken. They act on what has been suggested and feed back to the young people at the next meeting how their issues have been addressed. This helps young people feel involved and valued.

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 new staff complete the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction standards within six months of commencing employment at the home. (NMS 18.3)

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*.