

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	07/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC035477
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Jacqueline Bumford
Inspector	Jackie Line

Inspection date	07/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged Good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has declined in effectiveness. At the last full inspection, Ofsted raised four requirements and three recommendations. Although progress has been made in some areas two of the requirements have not been met. Staff do not fulfil their responsibilities to promote education, and this is impacting on most young people's learning and progress. Insufficient action to engage the placing authority and education professionals effectively means three young people are still without a personal education plan. Some young people's school attendance is worryingly low at 25% and 26%. Such poor attendance is likely to impact on young people's future life chances. A lack of structure and routine at the home means that when young people are not in school, training, or employment they do not participate in suitable activities. Daily records, and observations on inspection, show that most young people stay in bed beyond the start of the school day. Moreover, few plans are in place to engage them in positive activities once they do get up. A young person told the inspector that because there is not enough to do, time in the day 'drags' along. Consequently, staff are not providing support to help young people recognise the importance of education, build their confidence, and successfully re-engage them in learning. The home environment is not maintained to a good standard. Damage caused by young people is not repaired quickly, and most bedrooms are not kept in a reasonable state. Consequently, it is not homely; young people are not being helped to look after their things, and this does not give them the impression that they are valued enough to live in a home that is well looked after. Young people regularly engage in disruptive behaviour during the day, and at night. This includes throwing food, barricading themselves in rooms, causing damage, and smoking in the home. They reported to the inspector that they are often bored, and 'when we are bored we get into more trouble'. Responses to such behaviour by staff are sometimes poor. For example, they routinely lock internal	

doors to prevent access to the kitchen and lounge. This is not acceptable; can antagonise situations, and does not help young people to modify their behaviour.

The registered manager accepts that the current mix of young people living together is not good. In response to these concerns, she co-ordinates meetings with the placing authority to review young people's plans, and placement suitability. However, such meetings do not lead to clear decision making, and prompt action. Ineffective partnership working is impacting on young people's progress, and welfare.

One young person goes missing regularly. Staff do make efforts to locate him, and try to ensure his safe return. Multi-agency meetings take place to address risk and review strategies in place to minimise this. To date these are having minimal success, and repeated missing episodes means he is at continued risk of harm.

Managers have not responded appropriately to a safeguarding incident that took place in the home between two young people. One social worker has not been informed, and events have not been sufficiently reviewed to establish what exactly happened. This does not adequately protect young people. Following this inspection, the manager informed the inspector that this matter is now being reviewed appropriately.

Internal monitoring has not improved between inspections. The registered manager does not routinely read case records, and consequently is unaware of some significant events that take place at the home. Furthermore, monthly monitoring reports do not clearly identify and prioritise areas needing to be addressed. Poor management oversight limits the capacity to improve the quality of care provided at the home.

Some progress has been made since the last inspection. Risk assessments are now updated regularly young people also enjoy more regular contact when they spend extended time with their families, which promotes their well-being. One young person is making particularly good progress relative to her starting points. For example, risks relating to sexual exploitation continue to reduce, and she is now planning to return to school after a period of home tutoring. Most young people attend routine health appointments, and gaps in information are now being addressed. As a result, young people's health needs are largely met.

Employment practice has improved. Staff who are new to the home have sufficient references, and systems are in place to verify the reasons for their leaving previous roles involving work with young people. Consequently, unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

Significant incidents are now being reported to Ofsted. This means relevant people are informed in line with regulation, and the regulator can carry out its monitoring function because it is appropriately informed.

Five requirements have been raised to address the shortfalls identified at this inspection to secure the necessary improvement for this home to move forward.

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a local authority and provides care for up to six young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home takes emergency placements.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/01/2016	Full	Good
17/02/2015	Interim	improved effectiveness
02/07/2014	Full	Adequate
19/03/2014	Interim	Good Progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

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 (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
5: Engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met In order to meet the quality standard, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— (a) seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans.	15/04/2016
8: The education standard In order to meet the education standard the registered person must ensure – (2(a) that staff (viii) help a child who is excluded from school, or who is compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible, in particular that plans are reviewed and implemented without delay and when young people are not in school routines in the home are such that constructive educational activity is facilitated.	15/04/2016
11: The positive relationships standard In order to meet the positive relationships standard the registered person must ensure that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— (1)(b) an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and (c) positive responses to other children and adults.	15/04/2016
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure – (2)(a) that staff (vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare (d) that the premises used for the purpose of the home are designed, furnished, and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health.	15/04/2016

13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must enable, inspire and lead a culture in relation to the children's home that— (1)(a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and (b) promotes their welfare. (2)(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	15/04/2016
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What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

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