

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	11/03/2013
Inspector	Stephen Trainor
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	13/12/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's residential unit is operated by a local authority and provides care for up to six young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The unit takes emergency placements. Services have also been developed to support young people in need who are registered as refugees.

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 on 13 December 2012 the home's overall effectiveness was judged to be adequate. The children's home has improved the quality of care since then and this is now helping to secure some good outcomes for children and young people. A short timescale between inspections means some areas of work are still in the process of being addressed. The home's Registered Manager has a clear plan for where further improvements will be made.

Two requirements set at the last inspection have been responded to, ensuring improved safeguarding support. The present group of young people have no concerns about bullying. Individual and group needs are being managed well and young people remain safe through better coordinated referral and introduction practice. However, staff still need to attend formal training linked to developing their knowledge on the prevention of bullying. Young people have also showed that they can interact positively with others and this has resulted in less testing out of boundaries. The rules of the home are now being adhered to most of the time.

Action taken to stop young people from smoking in their bedrooms has had some success. There has been a clear reduction in the number of sanctions given out for this type of behaviour. Young people are clear about the consequences if this type of behaviour continues. The home's Registered Manager is committed to introducing further smoking cessation work to eradicate this unacceptable and potentially dangerous behaviour.

Seven of the eight recommendations set at the last inspection have been addressed. This has led to further improvements to the home's operation. The group of young people living at the home has changed considerably between inspections. The current group of young people receive individual care and support leading to better education attendance. Their individual plans are being reviewed on a monthly basis alongside social worker inputs. The young people have developed more skills to enable them to resolve conflict positively. Young people have learned how to take more responsibility for their actions and to make sensible and safe decisions most of the time. Strategies used by staff to reduce missing from home incidents have been particularly effective. The home's management team reports significant events transparently. This includes notifying Ofsted about the instigation and outcome of any child protection enquiry. However, there was a delay in Ofsted receiving one notification report.

Through internal and external measures, monitoring and controlling the activities of the home has been enhanced between inspections. Ofsted receives quality assurance monitoring reports at the required frequency. The formats being used for these reports provide clear evaluation of matters affecting the home's operation. New ideas and initiatives are constantly being introduced and the Registered Manager uses the information available to support continuous improvement. There was a limited response to the home's recent consultation survey, with few views and opinions being expressed by partners. As a result, some new ways of seeking views are planned to ensure partners contribute to the development of the service.

The home provides a child-focused service that is conducive to young people developing their potential. Young people regularly reflect on their progress with staff and this keeps them motivated. Young people benefit from consistent practice that allows their lives to improve. The ethos and culture of the home places young people at the forefront of practice. Programmes run by key workers positively change young people's behaviours. Young people work closely with staff and their hard work has created an interesting home where they like to be. Young people are choosing to spend their time doing constructive activities. Young people's successes and achievements are celebrated and this keeps them focussed.

All staff hold relevant qualifications and remain motivated to provide young people with the best possible experiences. Managers use their skills and experience to stimulate the enthusiasm of staff and channel their efforts effectively. Young people receive a good standard of care delivered by an experienced staff team. Good information, including policy and procedural guidance, is available to support staff's practice. Records provide a good overview of the work that is taking place at the home. Management are clear where progress needs to be made. For example, there

are plans to improve the home's appearance. This work has been agreed but a final start date still needs to be established.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure the registered person has a suitable system in place to notify within 24 hours the persons and appropriate authorities of the occurrence of significant events in accordance with Regulation 30 (NMS 24.1)
- ensure staff are trained to recognise and deal with any indications or incidents of bullying (NMS 3.12)
- ensure the registered person takes further action to address any issues of concern that are raised with them; this specifically relates to smoking cessation work effectively discouraging young people from smoking in their bedrooms (NMS 21.9)
- ensure the views of the child's social worker, independent reviewing officer, and any other professionals supporting their placement are sought regularly on the child's care and these views are recorded. (NMS 1.4)

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*.