

Children's Home – Monitoring visit

Inspection date	24/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC035477
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Lancashire County Council
Registered person address	PO Box 78, County Hall, Fishergate, Preston PR1 8XJ

Responsible individual	Paul McIntyre
Registered manager	Jacqueline Bumford
Inspector	Jackie Line

This monitoring visit.

An interim inspection was carried out on 12 January 2017 and the home was judged to have declined in effectiveness. The regulator identified widespread shortfalls including poor care planning, weaknesses in leadership and management, and a failure by staff to identify and respond to risk. These failings left young people vulnerable to harm and had a negative impact on their welfare.

As a result, four compliance notices were issued on 23 January 2017 together with a restriction of accommodation notice. This runs for a 12-week period effective from 23 January 2017.

An unannounced monitoring inspection was undertaken on 24 February 2017 to monitor three out of the four compliance notices and adherence to the restriction of accommodation in place.

This inspection found that no young people have been admitted to the home since 12 January 2017 and, therefore, the restriction of accommodation notice has not been breached.

Action has been taken so that staff understand their roles and responsibilities better in relation to keeping young people safe. Clear guidance and improved communication ensures that staff are more able to identify when young people are at risk of harm. Furthermore, when concerns arise staff take appropriate action to safeguard them. For example, staff acted promptly when they had concerns about a young person's welfare when she was out in the community. They also made sure that a young person had access to specialist medical attention when he needed it. Being alert to potential risk and taking appropriate action protects young people from harm.

Positive steps have been taken to strengthen leadership and management arrangements. A new interim manager has been appointed and she is driving improvements forward. More robust internal monitoring processes enable her to develop a good understanding of the standard of care being provided to young people and the impact that this has on young people's safety, experiences and progress.

Staff have received guidance about recording. As a result, key messages have been given to staff about being factual, concise and accurate. Managers cross-reference information to satisfy themselves that records provide a fair and honest reflection of events and day-to-day life in the home. Improved recording and monitoring safeguards young people.

When the interim manager has concerns about a young person's progress, she acts. For example, education and care planning meetings have been held to review concerns and agree a way forward. Furthermore, she monitors whether or not relevant professionals have acted on the recommendations made at these

meetings. This prevents drift and ensures that people are held to account. Work to progress young people's plans is ongoing.

The interim manager has met with senior managers within the local authority to review care planning processes. Some improvements to care planning provide young people with the opportunity to move into and on from the home in a positive way. Careful consideration about future plans helps to ensure that when young people move on it will be to a provision that is able to meet their individual needs well.

Ofsted is satisfied that sufficient measures have been taken to address the failings identified at the last inspection. There are signs of improvement and this is beginning to have a positive impact on young people. One compliance notice issued following the last inspection remains in place and this will be monitored at a future date. Ofsted's view is that the improvements made so far are tentative. Although some risky behaviours are reducing, for example missing from home, young people continue to present challenges. The interim manager recognises that staff continue to need high levels of support and guidance to manage young people's complex needs safely. A period of consolidation is required to allow for continued improvement. This will enable young people's individual plans to be progressed. As a result, the restriction of accommodation notice remains in place.

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/or behavioural difficulties. The home takes emergency placements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

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