

Children's homes – Monitoring

Inspection date	11 May 2016
Unique reference number	SC035648
Type of inspection	Monitoring
Inspector	Shaun Common

This monitoring visit

An independent person carried out a visit to the home on 12 February 2016 under regulation 44 of the Children's Homes regulations 2015. The report was sent to Ofsted and received on 1 April 2016. The report included commentary that indicated that a young person had been locked in their bedroom for periods of time when there were not enough staff on duty to meet their specific needs.

The purpose of the monitoring visit, carried out on 11 May 2016, was to evaluate care practice in light of the independent person's report.

Interviews with the registered manager and staff, and examination of single separation records, determined that there are a number of failings in practices that impacted upon young people's care and experiences.

There have been occasions when the required staffing levels have not been appropriate to meet the needs of all young people. This has led to occasions where a young person has been locked in their room contrary to regulations. Since the independent person's report, the manager has taken actions to ensure that there are sufficient staff on duty to meet all young people's needs.

Staff practices are not always to the standards expected. When a young person has spent time in their room with staff present, occasionally staff have left the room and locked the door. The young person has not requested this or agreed to be locked in. It appears that staff have not done this intentionally, but rather without thought or appropriate consideration to best practice, policy and procedure. Staff are recording these instances as elective single separation instead of directed single separation. In addition, the home's processes and records do not define or determine enforced single separation as a specific type.

Managers' monitoring and reporting is not robust. Managers have failed to identify staff practice that has fallen short of required standards. They have not recognised shortfalls in records, or used closed circuit television to assist in the monitoring of all aspects of care provision. They have therefore not taken action to address deficiencies in order to improve the experiences and quality of care of young people.

Information about this children's home

This secure children's home is managed by a local authority. It is approved by the Department for Education to restrict young people's liberty. The children's home can accommodate up to 42 young people who are aged between 10 and 17 years. It provides for up to 24 young people placed by the Youth Justice Board, and 18 young people accommodated under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 and who are placed by local authorities. Admission of any young person under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who is under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State. Education is provided on site in dedicated facilities.

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 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 must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
13.—(1) The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— (a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and (b) promotes their welfare. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— (d) ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child. Specifically, ensure that staffing is always at a level that is appropriate to meet the needs of all young people living at the home.	31 May 2016
6. (1) The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— (a) understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; (b) use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.	31 May 2016

(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— (b) ensure that staff— (iv) provide personalised care that meets each child’s needs, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans, taking account of the child’s background.	
Ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes the matters set out in the regulation. Specifically, ensure that single separation is used and recorded in line with the home’s policy, secure accommodation network guidance and regulations (Regulation 35 (3)(4) and The Children (Secure Accommodation) Regulations 1991, section 17(g)).	31 May 2016
Maintain the system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— (2) (a) the quality of care provided for children; (c) any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (5) The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. Specifically, ensure that monitoring systems are robust, identify any shortfalls in practice or records, and identify actions that are then implemented (Regulation 45).	31 May 2016

Information about this inspection

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

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

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