

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	12/02/2013
Inspector	Valerie Shephard
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	28/06/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This service is a privately run children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to seven children or young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

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 **good progress**.

This interim inspection has focused on the progress made by the home since the last inspection when the overall judgement was outstanding. The home has demonstrated continued improvement in quality of care and outcomes for young people. There were no requirements or recommendations made at the last inspection.

A stable, qualified and experienced staff team provide excellent care to young people and endeavour to develop positive relationships with them. Their commitment and enthusiasm to forge relationships assists them to fully understand young people's specific needs. The staff team comprises people of different ages, genders and a variety of backgrounds. As a result, they bring a wide range of skills and experience and provide suitable role models for young people in the home. Young people benefit from the excellent quality of care given to them which has a positive effect on outcomes. There is evidence of improvement in young people's attendance at school, participation in sport and aspirations for their future. An example of this is a young

person expressing a desire to commence an apprenticeship. Young people on independence plans acquire skills such as shopping and cooking in accordance with their age and stage of development. As a result, they gain in confidence which has a positive effect on their self-esteem.

There continues to be extensive consultation with young people to inform care planning. Staff achieve this through discussion on a daily basis as well as through formal keyworker sessions and young people's meetings. There is also the provision for all young people to have access to an independent visitor if they would like this. Young people believe staff listen to them; one young person said, 'I can talk to any member of staff in the home; they will all listen to you.' There have been no complaints since the last inspection. This may be as a result of young people feeling able to raise issues directly with staff on an informal basis.

The home has an excellent reputation for working with young people with a history of risk taking behaviour. There are well-established positive relationships with the local police and the placing authorities for the young people they care for. Overall there has been a reduction in the rate at which young people go missing from home. Effective channels of communication ensure that staff promptly inform relevant professionals if a young person goes missing. On these occasions, staff make strenuous efforts to maintain contact with young people to expedite a speedy and safe return. The home fully contributes to strategy and planning meetings where such behaviour is a cause for concern. Staff go over and above what is required in an attempt to safeguard young people who place themselves at risk.

The home has recently experienced a number of short-term admissions and discharges. These have been as a result of changes in plans for young people. Staff provide effective emotional support to young people in an attempt to minimise any disruption to their daily living. This serves to increase young people's sense of well-being and ease any potential anxieties in relation to their own placement.

Staff provide an environment where young people are safe and feel safe. The home does not tolerate bullying; there have been no reports of bullying since the previous inspection. Bullying is discussed regularly in young people's meetings and staff are vigilant in their efforts to ensure that there are no opportunities for bullying. The home rarely uses sanctions to manage inappropriate behaviour and physical restraint has not been necessary to keep young people safe. Effective management strategies focus on young people making sensible choices which result in improvements in their behaviour. One young person said, 'staff help me not to lose my temper and to try and talk things through.'

Education is highly valued in the home and staff strive to engage young people in their education and training. The existence of strong links with local schools and educational personnel helps to hasten school placements for new admissions. Staff assist young people to choose the most suitable training course for them, taking into consideration any talents or interests they have. This helps young people to gain confidence in their skills and ultimately improve their life chances.

There is an established Registered Manager in the home and evidence of strong leadership. Management routinely consult parents and professionals and receive very positive feedback about the home and the care afforded young people. This feedback assists management to continually improve practice and drive standards forward.

The home provides pleasant living accommodation and is subject to excellent maintenance. There is ample space in the home to meet the needs of all young people who live there. Young people enjoy their living environment and there is only occasional damage to the property.

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*.