

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC036026
Inspector	Monica Hargreaves
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Sheffield City Council
Registered person address	Sheffield City Council, Town Hall Pinstone Street SHEFFIELD S1 2HH
Responsible individual	Dorne Collinson
Registered manager	Patrick Michael McGeeney
Date of last inspection	09/05/2014

Inspection date	24/02/2015
Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **declined in effectiveness**.

At the last inspection, the home was judged to be good in all areas. Since that time, the home has declined in effectiveness. This is because there has been a decline in outcomes for young people, particularly in relation to health issues, risk taking behaviour and engagement with education. There has also been an increase in bullying behaviour which has had a negative impact on some young people.

One recommendation was made at the last inspection. This related to young people's health, specifically their use of substances and smoking. This is not met and is repeated at this inspection. Staff have continued to work hard to encourage young people to avoid smoking and using drugs. They liaise closely with substance misuse teams and they also work with the looked after children's nurse. These professionals visit the home to talk to young people about health issues. In spite of the efforts of staff, most of the young people who currently live in the home smoke and use drugs.

Admissions to the home are generally well planned. The manager makes efforts to ensure that the home can meet young people's needs before agreeing their admission. Whilst care is taken to ensure an appropriate mix of young people, recent admissions have had a negative impact on all the young people. The mix of young people has led to instances of bullying and as a consequence, an increase in incidents of challenging behaviour in the home and risk taking behaviour such as going missing from the home. Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the young people they look after and persevere in addressing these issues in order to keep young people safe and try to improve their outcomes. They have continued to work hard with young people to reduce bullying behaviours which have recently developed in the home, but have had little success. Staff are appropriately trained and they respond positively to challenging behaviour. There are very few restraints.

However, the behaviour of some young people continues to be disruptive and they have caused damage to parts of the home. This impacts on the overall appearance of the home. The assistant manager has put plans in place to make good all the areas of damage.

Staff make sure that all young people have clear risk assessment plans in place in relation to going missing from the home. They work closely with relevant agencies if a young person does go missing and are proactive in searching for them and returning them safely to the home. However, some young people have continued to go missing. Staff work in partnership with agencies such as the child sexual exploitation team to ensure that there is good exchange of information and clear plans in place to protect young people who are risk of sexual exploitation.

Staff have a very positive view about the value of education and they work hard to help young people to engage. Some young people attend school regularly and have therefore been able to make some progress. Other young people have no identified placement and some are refusing to engage with education. This impacts on their ability to achieve and consequently on their opportunities for later life.

Recently there have been gaps on the staff rota caused by staff absence through sickness and staff leaving the home to work elsewhere. Although staffing levels remain as detailed in the Statement of Purpose, this has not always been sufficient to ensure that staff are always able to give full attention to all the young people at times when their behaviour has been disruptive. The assistant manager with the support of his senior manager has addressed this by recruiting a new member of staff to fill the vacancy and appointing an agency worker for a fixed period of time.

In line with decisions made at their review, a young person has very recently moved on to another placement that is thought will better meet their needs. Staff feel that this change in the mix of young people will over time have a positive impact on the young people who remain in the home.

Ofsted has been formally notified that the Registered Manager is to be absent from the home for more than 28 days. The home is currently being managed by the assistant manager who is qualified and very experienced. He provides good leadership to the team in the manager's absence. Staff feel that they are well supported by their managers and by their colleagues in the team.

One requirement and four recommendations have been made at this inspection. These relate to admissions, young people's health and education needs, staffing and the maintenance of the home.

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority children's home, which provides care and accommodation for up to five young people from 11 to 16 years who experience emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/05/2014	Full	good
16/12/2013	Interim	inadequate progress
17/07/2013	Full	good
21/02/2013	Interim	good progress

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
11 (2001)	ensure that the home is conducted so as to promote and make proper provision for the care, education, supervision and, where appropriate, treatment, of children accommodated there. Specifically, ensure that the needs of individual young people can be met along with the needs of the group (Regulation 11 (1) (b))	25/03/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure that children understand their health needs, how to maintain a

healthy lifestyle and to make informed decisions about their own health (NMS 6.2)

- ensure that children attend school, college or alternative provision regularly (NMS 8.3)
- ensure that the home is well maintained and decorated (NMS 10.3)
- ensure that the overall number and deployment of staff both as a group and on individual shifts, can meet the individual needs of all children resident in the home. (NMS 17.1)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

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 main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.