

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	27/02/2014
Inspector	Rosemary Chapman
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	23/10/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is owned and managed by the local authority. It can accommodate up to four 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**.

At the last inspection in October 2013 the home was judged as good overall. One requirement was made in relation to first aid training for staff. This inspection judges that the home is making good progress. It has fully addressed the requirement by ensuring that there is always a member of staff on duty who has an up-to-date first aid certificate, thereby promoting young people's health and safety. Additionally, the young people have made good progress and the home can demonstrate that it has continued to improve the quality of care.

All the young people have school or college places and, for most, attendance is excellent. For some young people this has been a significant improvement. Prior to moving to this home, one young person did not attend school at all. This young person now has 100% attendance, loves school and recognises that this is real progress. Young people also achieve well because staff provide good support. Staff work well in partnership with education providers and are prepared to challenge partner agencies if they are not providing the required resources. For example, if necessary the manager will escalate concerns to the responsible individual if a young person's outcomes are diminished as a result of a partner agency's actions. This has had beneficial results in terms of additional educational support for a young person

in the home.

Young people no longer engage in risk-taking behaviour. Young people who had issues with drug and alcohol misuse and who were going missing from the home no longer engage in this behaviour. This is significant progress and means that young people are much safer.

Young people feel safe and are safe in this home. They get on well with each other and with staff. There is no bullying. One young person said 'it is the best place I have lived.' Although there are times when young people misbehave, this is dealt with well and sanctions are rare. Good behaviour is promoted through the use of incentives, such as tickets for a football match. Young people are encouraged to see how their behaviour impacts on others and they recognise this through restorative interventions. Physical intervention has not been used for some time and not since the last inspection.

Young people who are new to the home are made to feel very welcome and staff provide appropriate reassurance to help them settle. They have introductory visits so they can see their bedrooms and meet staff and the other young people. To make them feel at home, staff ensure that before they move in their bedrooms are decorated to reflect the young person's interests. For example, one young person's bedroom was painted in the colours of the football team she supports, including the badge of the club on one wall. This demonstrates a very caring and person-centred approach to recognising how a young person may feel when experiencing such a significant change in their lives as entering residential care.

Young people have plenty of opportunities to engage in the wider community and explore their interests. This includes joining a local football club, going to football matches, swimming and having friends round, including sleepovers. Staff have placed greater emphasis on ensuring young people do lots of activities and were particularly keen to arrange a good programme of activities over the recent half-term holiday.

Staff have access to good training opportunities, including recent training on internet safety and self-harm, so they are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the needs of the young people in the home. Staff feel well supported by regular team meetings and supervision. This is further enhanced by monthly consultations with a psychologist which are now fully embedded. As a result, staff have a better understanding of attachment and how this affects young people's behaviour and the best strategies to use to bring about a positive response.

One staff member commented that the home 'is constantly evolving' and that the staff team reflect on how they can improve the quality of care at every team meeting. This includes using social pedagogy as a means of decreasing any institutional practices. The development plan is currently being reviewed to make it more outcome-focused. It demonstrates that staff and managers are aspirational for young people to achieve outstanding outcomes.

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*.