

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Angus Mackay
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Provision subtype	Children's home

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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 (March 2011)*.

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.

Service information

Brief description of the service

The home provides short and medium-term residential care for up to five young people with emotional and or behavioural problems. The home also undertakes outreach work with young people, either to prevent the need for accommodation, or to support them and their carers once they have left the home.

This service is provided by a local authority.

Progress

Since their previous inspection the service is judged to be making **good** progress.

The inspection judgement was good at the last full inspection which took place in June 2011, with two recommendations and two requirements being set. The home has successfully addressed all of these. Young people enjoy a service from a well managed home with a stable, well trained and confident staff team.

Young people benefit from the manager's changes to the recording system about their personal needs. Staff record specific interventions, where they address issues related to the young people's racial or cultural background. Staff track progress with these and other interventions related to gender issues to improve the outcomes for young people.

The Registered Manager monitors the quality of care provided in the home ensuring that it is consistent with the relevant regulation. The monitor reflects the views of young people and their families and provides an excellent analysis of activity over the period covered. The manager and staff make good use of this information to improve interventions with young people.

Young people have contributed to producing a guide for younger residents, or those who prefer more visual displays of information. Minor corrections have ensured this provides current safeguarding supports to young people. In addition the manager has revised the Statement of Purpose, to reflect current practice. The manager is rewording the guidance on staffing, in this document, to make it accurately reflect the policy related to the gender mix of staff.

Young people and their families have a high opinion of the home and the staff. One parent commented that, 'the carers in the home are brilliant.' Young people say there is no bullying in the home and staff help keep them safe. The young people say that the food is excellent, fresh and varied. One parent commented that the young person had benefitted from experiencing a wide range of food, from different cultures, which they had never previously experienced. Parents identify the major strength of the home to be the staff and the manager. Comments include, 'I can't

fault any of them, they provide good boundaries,' and 'the manager is brilliant, she is fantastic and on top of everything.' Young people are engaged in commenting on sanctions and on their view of what is effective. Staff do not always accurately record all sanctions to demonstrate that they comply with regulations.

Staff provide a safe environment for young people, which they enhance by their application of specific training. Young people benefit from staff's ability to identify high risk activities from a range of trigger signals, highlighted in training. Staff work closely with a range of other professionals on engaging young people with all appropriate support networks. Staff have improved young people's safety with recent changes to the wiring and the installation of a modern fire alarm system. Staff have an excellent understanding of the fire system and young people can explain the evacuation process. The manager is making a minor change to the display of all those who have taken part in drills. This will make this information, from the manager's regular audit, immediately available to all.

Young people benefit from constant improvements to the service. Staff are currently trialling a young person's self assessment tool. This will give young people more involvement in identifying their own starting point and potentially tracking their progress. To reflect the changed Statement of Purpose staff are training in 'leaving care work' and have gathered a range of resources and contacts to use with young people. Young people are contributing more to the running of the home and are being involved in future recruitment. The manager is incorporating feedback from her six weekly meetings with each young person in staff appraisals. In addition young people have regular sessions with an art therapist to assist in their personal development.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that all sanctions are clear, reasonable and fair. (NMS 3.8)