

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC036917
Inspector	Patrick Sullivan
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Registered person address	Children's Services, The Woolwich Centre 35 Wellington Street LONDON SE18 6HQ
Responsible individual	Andrew O'Sullivan
Registered manager	Deborah Forde
Date of last inspection	04/06/2014

Inspection date	12/02/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

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

This is a home where young people are cared for by a committed, caring and experienced staff team. Young people make good progress at the home and achieve positive outcomes.

The home has a very experienced and committed Registered Manager who has been in post for a number of years. She has recently returned to the home full time following a part-time secondment elsewhere in the local authority. The manager is passionate about improving young people's lives and this ethos permeates the staff team and the home.

The home is located in a building which is not conducive to generating a homely environment, but the efforts of the staff team have contributed to creating an environment that is warm and nurturing. The communal areas are bright and welcoming with lots of photographs of young people, who live or have lived at the home. During this inspection part of the home was being redecorated to improve the standard further.

This is a home where staff do not give up on young people and try and ensure that they have a positive experience while living there. A recent short-term admission to the home displayed very challenging behaviour and caused significant disruption. The manager accepts that this young person was not really suited to the home but felt that it was the best placement until a more appropriate one could be identified. When this placement was identified, staff at the home made extensive efforts to ensure that the young person left the home in a positive manner.

The home continues to provide support to young people who have left the home. Young people regularly return for the summer barbecue and a meal on Christmas Day. One young woman who has left the home is currently undertaking some work

around updating the young person's guide.

Induction of new staff is good, with opportunities to shadow more experienced staff members. New staff find the existing staff team helpful and welcoming. They have been able to ask questions and 'every one has been answered'. Supervision of staff is effective and regular. Staff describe it as being of good quality and that it 'makes them think'.

In general, young people are kept safe at this home. Where they go missing, the staff are very proactive in seeking to reduce these instances. Since the last inspection, one young person has had a significant increase in missing episodes. The home has worked in partnership with the social worker and a disruption meeting has been arranged in the next couple of weeks to assess possible risks and ways of reducing the missing episodes.

Young people make progress in all areas while living at this home. Education attendance for some young people improves. The home is good at engaging with the local Child Adolescent Mental Health Team and this ensures that young people's mental health needs are addressed.

Social workers feel supported by the home and state that communication between staff and themselves is good. The staff provide regular, informative reports to social workers detailing any changes in behaviour.

Young people enjoy living at the home and feel that staff care for them. They say that 'you can talk to the staff and they are really caring'. Some young people who have moved into the home from foster care are unhappy that some allowances appear to be unequal and they receive less money for birthdays and clothing than they did when they were in foster care.

Management oversight of the home is good. Internal review of care reports are now being completed in a more timely manner. External leaders are aware of the strengths and areas for improvement in the home and are committed to ensuring the home improves further. Staffing is adequate for the size of the home but the lack of administrative support has an impact on the effectiveness of the manager in terms of the time she has to spend on routine paperwork tasks.

Information about this children's home

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.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/06/2014	Full	good
05/03/2014	Interim	good progress
09/10/2013	Full	good
27/02/2013	Interim	good progress

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.