

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	27/02/2013
Inspector	Caroline Wilson
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	03/10/2012
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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.

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 home was judged good overall at the last full inspection in October 2012. That inspection did not raise any statutory requirements or recommendations. Since then, the home has made improvements in the quality of care that it provides and in its outcomes for young people.

Staff at the home are enrolled on a social learning pilot scheme with a reputable mental health establishment. The purpose of this is to promote the successful management of negative behaviours that young people may display. Techniques include staff using themselves as role models to set examples of good social skills for young people to mirror. Sanctions used are relevant to the misdemeanour. For instance, if young people purposefully tear buttons off their clothing, the sanction imposed would be for them to sew the button back on. These methods have been effective in reducing incidences of negative behaviours. The home are also in the process of implementing a mentoring scheme, where ex-residents will return to offer guidance and support to current residents around matters such as education and

employment to support their successful transition into adulthood.

The return of the Registered Manager has enabled the deputy managers to resume their substantive posts. Their supervision of staff is conducted at monthly intervals to ensure that they understand their areas of responsibilities and appropriate methods for working with young people. However, not all staff have received records of their sessions from their supervisor in a timely manner to ensure that any follow up action required is addressed during the next session. The impact of this is minimised as staff are encouraged to take their own notes during supervision.

Young people are supported to maintain effective relationships with their families and other significant people in their lives, particularly where these relationships may prove challenging. Key work sessions prove invaluable in enabling young people to gain an understanding of their backgrounds and to develop emotional resilience to manage any difficulties that they may face in respect of contact and other matters. Young people can also have support from external agencies, such as systemic family therapists, who work with them and family members to promote good contact arrangements. Young people enjoy positive relationships with their friends, who may, subject to relevant risk assessments, be invited to spend time with them during the home's annual summer holiday.

Young people understand how to keep themselves safe within the community. They are encouraged to keep in regular contact with staff, especially when they are absent without authority, in order to facilitate their safe return to the home. Staff understand their roles in implementing Runaway and Missing from Home and Care procedures that ensure relevant agencies and significant others are notified. Discussions are held with young people on their return to the home in order to ascertain whether they have any concerns that may have led them to be absent. Young people are aware of the risk posed with regards to sexual exploitation. They are encouraged to have personal relationships with peers of a similar age to their own to minimise the risk of this occurring. Young people can make confidential use of services external to the home that promote their sexual health.

Young people are consulted on a monthly basis when they have the opportunity to comment on any aspect of the care that they receive. The outcome of the most recent consultation evidences that they are satisfied with their care. Staff respond to suggestions made, such as redecorating young people's bedrooms as requested. Staff help young people to understand why they cannot act on some requests. For instance, where one young person asked that their pocket money be increased from their current rate to a million pounds a week.

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 written records of staff supervision are completed in a timely manner. (Standard 19.5)

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*.