

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC037657
Inspection date	10/02/2014
Inspector	Nick Veysey
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	13/06/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home provides care and accommodation for two young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is managed by the 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 **satisfactory progress**.

At the full inspection in June 2013 the overall effectiveness of this children's home was judged as good. Some minor shortfalls were found in relation to recording child protection concerns, notifications and information about young people new to the home. Also, there are issues around the standard of the accommodation, in particular unwanted items stored in the garden, dining room and games room and the frost damage to the garden wall.

The children's home is making satisfactory progress. Young people are making progress in many aspects of their lives and staff continue to provide a high quality of care that promotes young people's development and safety. The manager has addressed most of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. The manager usually keeps the relevant agencies informed of serious events involving young people, but on one occasion he has not informed Ofsted about a safeguarding issue. This shortfall limited Ofsted's understanding of the home's ability to keep young people safe. However, the manager took suitable and decisive action to protect young people from harm by reporting the concerns to the social worker, police and safeguarding team. He worked in partnership with these agencies to

identify the risks to young people's safety and took suitable steps to manage the risks effectively. The manager now ensures that there is a detailed written record of safeguarding concerns, the actions taken by the manager, staff and other agencies in response, decision making and the outcome and strategies for protecting young people. Young people live in a comfortable and homely environment and the unwanted items in the garden and around the house have been removed. However, the repairs to the garden wall have not yet been completed. The manager arranged the funding for the repairs but is still waiting for the work to start.

Staff place the welfare of individual young people at the centre of their practice. They are reflective, resourceful and creative in finding ways to support young people, regardless of the challenges young people and their circumstances may present. Staff are committed to helping young people with complex emotional needs overcome difficulties. Their perseverance has enabled young people to make significant progress in particular over the last few months. Young people are more settled and emotionally secure. They are more able to form positive relationships with staff and accept their help and guidance. They are taking more responsibility for their own health needs and make positive choices to go to the dentist, opticians and keep other important health appointments. Their participation in education and school attendance is improving. Recent school reports show that young people are more motivated and working really hard at the expected level, and in some areas exceeding their targets. Consequently, they have increased opportunities to achieve, develop their knowledge and skills, pursue their talents and gain qualifications.

Young people's behaviour has improved and they are rarely involved in harmful behaviour that impacts negatively on their welfare and other people. Young people benefit from a nurturing and structured environment where positive behaviour is actively promoted through praise and rewards. Staff apply consistent boundaries tailored to the specific needs of each young person to help them feel secure and understand what is expected of them. Occasionally young people struggle to manage their feelings and resolve conflicts positively. Sometimes their level of distress and frustration results in aggressive behaviour. Even when young people's behaviour has been particularly difficult, staff have continued to show young people that they care about them, and no matter what has happened they will not give up wanting to help them. At times this has been very hard for staff, but their resilience and patience is paying off and the incidents of aggressive behaviour have reduced significantly. Staff are developing a really good understanding of how best to intervene to help young people manage their feelings constructively, including ignoring certain behaviour in a planned way, giving young people choices about their actions and helping them understand the consequences, and helping young people think about their own strategies to help them calm down. Young people are starting to find it easier to manage their feelings appropriately and are talking more to staff about what is upsetting them. The manager has taken active steps to develop staff's competences and knowledge in understanding individual young people's behaviour; including training relevant to the young people's specific needs, and support and guidance from clinical psychologists. Young people's social workers are very positive about staff's commitment to young people and the standard of care and support they provide.

The manager provides clear and effective leadership. He places a strong emphasis on meeting young people's needs and promoting their welfare. He is a supportive manager, but also challenges staff and himself to reflect on what they do and think about ways to improve the quality of care and outcomes for young people. The development shows he has a clear understanding of the strengths of the service and areas for development. Young people's written records now include clear, and up to date placement plans, health plans and risk assessments. The records provide a detailed picture of young people's progress and experiences; and information that contributes to an understanding of young people's lives and informs the plans for their care.

Areas for improvement

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
30 (2001)	ensure if any of the events listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 5 takes place the registered person shall without delay notify the persons indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table. (Regulation 30 (1))	10/02/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home is well maintained and in good structural repair, in particular the frost damage to the garden wall. (NMS 10.3)

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*.