

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	29/02/2012
Inspector	Rosemary Dancer
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Date of last inspection	15/11/2011
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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 is owned and managed by a local authority. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for no more than four young people. The service provides care and accommodation for young people who have complex behavioural and emotional needs and/or whose present accommodation or care arrangements render them in need or at risk of significant harm. It provides a community based residential service designed to improve family relationships and prevent the need for the child or young person to leave their home except for planned periods of residential care and to provide support for families to enable them to continue caring for their child.

Progress

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

At the previous inspection in November 2011, the overall quality rating for this home was judged as outstanding; one recommendation was made. This related to developing and providing staff with appropriate training if they are required to supervise and facilitate contact. This recommendation has been partially met. Because of the complex nature of the type of contact staff facilitate the acting manager sensibly decided to develop training specific to this. The plan has been developed and is based on research. Clear learning outcomes have been identified. The training is to be provided to all staff working in the local authority's residential homes so that all of these children and their families benefit. While this recommendation has not been fully met the timescales the acting manager has set for planning and delivering such complex training are realistic. Therefore the recommendation is repeated with an acknowledgement that the manager has worked hard to plan relevant training of a good quality. Progress will be monitored at the next full inspection.

This is a home in which young people continue to thrive and make progress in all areas of their lives. Young people identified that there is nothing that they want the home to change and said that everything about living in the home is good, including the staff and the food. They recognise the benefits of the skilful way in which staff help them sort out any differences they have between each other; through this they have learnt to treat each other with respect.

Young people who have moved in since the last inspection have settled well. Young people have developed an interest in their education and positive relationships with those around them. Their overall well-being has improved. For example, their self-esteem has increased and they are more confident in their abilities. This has been achieved through the nurturing and encouraging way staff care for them and the positive way staff work with other agencies to ensure young people's needs are met. For some young people there has been a successful move into alternative care

arrangements due to the skilful way staff work with them and their families. For example, young people have been rehabilitated home and care plans have changed to enable a move into independent living sooner than originally planned.

Young people continue to benefit from a highly committed and skilled staff team. They really know and like the young people they work with and want to help them to lead fulfilling lives. The manager, who is currently covering for the Registered Manager, also shows a high commitment to improving the lives of the young people, and their families; she provides strong leadership to the team.

There has been good progress in developing services to benefit the young people. The home has engaged with an organisation that offers assessment, training and support in a specific model of care. This model focuses on helping young people's emotional well-being stabilise thus improving their life chances. Young people have had a meeting with representatives from an organisation offering advocacy service; this means should they want any independent support they can access this. The arrangements for training staff in the positive handling strategies used in the home are being improved. This is to ensure that the strategies are used in a consistent way across the local authority's homes and that all staff are skilled and confident using them. Senior workers are being trained to mentor and supervise lower grade staff to provide career progression opportunities for them and to support the manager.

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 staff have appropriate training if they are required to supervise and facilitate contact. (NMS 9.2)