

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	19/06/2013
Inspector	Amanda Ellis
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Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	06/03/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is operated by a private company and provides care for up to four young people. The home is registered to provide care for young people who may have emotional or behavioural difficulties.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: a service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

Good: a service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements

Adequate: a service that only meets minimum requirements

Inadequate: a service that does not meet minimum requirements

Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is judged to be **inadequate**.

Young people do not make adequate progress at the home. They say they do not feel safe. They feel that their wishes and feelings are not taken into account in the running of the home. The current management of the home fails to provide an adequate quality of care. This means that outcomes for young people are inadequate and young people's safety and well-being is compromised.

Management of the home has not been effective, resulting in shortfalls in a number of areas. In broad terms, improvements are needed in terms of: consultation with young people, parents and stakeholders: proactive promotion of education, activities and independence preparation: monitoring of young people's records: provision of all mandatory staff training: ensuring health and safety matters support welfare and safety and providing robust solutions to counter bullying.

In addition to the shortfalls identified within this inspection, the Registered Manager has not adequately addressed all of the shortfalls identified at the last inspection. Additionally, Ofsted received a complaint which raised concerns about the care provided to young people. The complaint was investigated and resulted in a further requirement being made. This related to the routine of the home supporting the promotion of education. This requirement has also not been met. This does not evidence the home's capacity to continually improve.

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
11 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is conducted so as to promote and make proper provision for the welfare of children accommodated there, with specific regard to the provision of care appropriate to the needs of young people who self-harm and young people who require support in relation to drug misuse (Regulation 11 (1) (a))	26/07/2013
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose, which shall include a description of the measure used (Regulation 17B (3)(c))	26/07/2013
20 (2001)	ensure that the physical, emotional and mental health of the children accommodated in the children's home, with particular regard to ensuring each child is provided with guidance, support and advice on health and personal care issues appropriate to his needs and wishes (Regulation 20 (1) (d))	26/07/2013
21 (2001)	ensure that there are suitable arrangements for the recording, handing, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of any medicines received into the children's home, with particular reference to storing in a secure place so as to prevent any child accommodated there having unsupervised access to it (Regulation 21 (2) (a))	26/07/2013
23 (2001)	ensure that any activities in which children participate are so far as reasonably practicable free from avoidable risk. This is with particular reference to ensuring the home's vehicles receive appropriate maintenance when required (Regulation 23 (b))	26/07/2013
27 (2001)	ensure that all persons employed receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal. This is with particular reference to first aid and safeguarding training (Regulation 27 (4) (a))	26/07/2013
28 (2001)	maintain in respect of each child who is accommodated in a children's home a permanent, up-to-date, signed and dated record which includes the information in Schedule 3. This is with regard to health and educational records (Regulation 28, Schedule 3 (12) (14) (22) (23) (24))	26/07/2013
31 (2001)	ensure that all parts of the children's home used by the children are secure from unauthorised access (Regulation 31 (2) (b))	26/07/2013
32 (2001)	ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that the persons working at the home and, so far as	26/07/2013

	practicable, children accommodated there, are aware of the procedure to be followed in the case of fire (Regulation 32 (1A))	
33 (2001)	establish and maintain a system whereby the person carrying out visits in accordance with this regulation shall interview, with their consent and in private, such of the children accommodated there, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as appears necessary in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home (Regulation 33 (4) (a))	26/07/2013
34 (2001)	ensure that the registered person shall establish and maintain a system for monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6 at appropriate intervals; and improving the quality of care provided in the children's home. This system shall provide for consultation with children accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities. (Regulation 34 (3))	26/07/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure that children communicate their views on all aspects of their care and support (NMS 1.3)
- ensure that where children identify bullying as a problem at the home, staff and children understand bullying is unacceptable. Staff working in the home understand their role in helping to prevent and counter bullying by any adult or child living or working in the home (NMS 3.11)
- ensure that the children's guide includes a summary of what the home sets out to do for children, how they can find out their rights, how a child can contact their IRO, the Children's Rights Director, Ofsted if they wish to raise a concern with inspectors, and how to secure access to an independent advocate, with specific regard to an up to date telephone number for Ofsted. (NMS 13.5)

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **inadequate**.

Young people are encouraged to develop a more positive self-view and improve their emotional resilience. There are opportunities for the development of positive relationships. For example, the stability of the staff group means young people receive consistency in care. In addition, the staffing ratio allows for staff to spend quality time with young people. This means young people develop trusting relationships with staff and are more able to talk about and understand their background.

Educational outcomes for young people are inadequate due to insufficient promotion of education. Some young people are resistant to engage in education. However routines within the home, combined with a lack of consistency and boundaries, mean young people are not sufficiently encouraged to participate in education or activities.

Young people's experience of health care is inconsistent. Poor record keeping makes it difficult for staff to ensure that young people's health needs are met. However, staff do manage to help some young people to stay healthy by arranging statutory health appointments. Staff ensure input from local and specialist services when necessary.

Young people are enabled to sustain relationships with their families. They benefit from contact with important people in their lives. The staff team collaborates with professionals and families and promotes positive contact for young people in line with the arrangements agreed in their individual care plans. This also supports young people in maintaining their personal identity and emotional security.

Young people are not provided with an effective independence training programme. Young people state that they are not developing the practical experience and knowledge necessary for independent living. This failure to enable young people to develop independence skills reduces their chances of making a successful transition to independent living. Therefore this reduces their life chances and outcomes.

Quality of care

The quality of the care is **inadequate**.

A child-centred and dedicated staff team cares for young people. There are some positive relationships between the staff and young people. This enables young people to feel valued. Young people state that they are generally happy living in the home.

Professionals working with the home give generally positive feedback about the care provided. They also say that staff work well with them and that despite complex and challenging behaviours, the care provided has a positive impact on young people's behaviour.

Young people receive a guide which contains information on their care, advocacy, and the details of people they can contact if they wish to raise a concern. This ensures that they understand what to expect from the care they receive. However, the contact details for Ofsted are incorrect, thereby preventing young people being able to contact the regulator directly. Young people know how to make a complaint and where complaints have been made, they have been dealt with in accordance with the home's policy.

Young people's health care is not robustly supported. Examples include young people's records not containing all required information and key work sessions in adequately addressing specific identified needs. Therefore the home has ineffective

systems to ensure all young people receive consistent care to meet their individual needs.

Staff are trained in first aid and the safe administration of medication. However, since the last inspection young people have had unauthorised access to medication on two occasions. This means the arrangements for dealing with medication are not safe and effective.

Young people are encouraged to eat healthily and meals provided are varied, balanced and nutritious. Young people say that they like the food and are able to have an input on menu choices.

Young people's education fails to be adequately promoted by the staff or management team. Young people are not attending educational provision and there are insufficient plans in place to provide meaningful activities or engagement. Because of the lack of structured activity, young people are often bored and at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour.

The staff team are diverse in ethnicity and culture and provide a broad age range and gender mix. This means that young people are supported by staff who understand their individual needs to access services and resources. The home is comfortable and is in the process of further renovation.

Safeguarding children and young people

The service is **inadequate** at keeping children and young people safe and feeling safe.

Young people say they do not feel safe. Issues of bullying in the home have been brought to the regulator's attention. Young people do not feel confident that staff deal with these issues when they arise. However, they are able to identify adults they can talk to if they have any concerns.

Young people have not gone missing from the home since the last inspection. There are good working relationships with the local police, with an agreed protocol in place to implement when young people go missing. This means that staff have clear guidance as to the steps they should take on occasions when young people are missing from care.

Staff are committed to using positive behaviour management techniques. As a result, there are minimal restraints in the home. Staff who undertake any restraints are suitably trained and equipped with the skills to de-escalate situations to avoid the need for physical intervention. This means that young people learn to modify their behaviours without staff having to use physical intervention.

The home and care provision is not sufficiently physically safe and appropriately secure to meet the needs of young people. For example, a young person told the inspector about an unrepaired external door lock. This meant the home was at risk

from potential unauthorised access. In addition, at the time of the inspection, the home's vehicle, which remained in use, was faulty, despite the concern being recorded for a period of three months. While there has not been a negative impact on young people, the potential exists for young people to be at risk of significant harm.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the children's home are **inadequate**.

The last inspection of this home resulted in a judgement of inadequate progress. The home has failed sufficiently to rectify previously identified shortfalls. Further shortfalls have been identified at this inspection. These factors limit the home's capacity to improve.

The manager has adequately addressed four of the six requirements raised at the last inspection. The requirement to ensure that all staff receive appropriate supervision has been addressed, with all staff receiving regular and up-to-date supervision. However, this regulation has been breached in terms of shortfalls in mandatory staff training. While staff receive regular training, not all staff have had up-to-date safeguarding and first aid training. This requirement is repeated with specific regard to staff training.

The two requirements relating to physical restraint records remain unmet. The records do not always show the full detail of the physical intervention used and omit the views of the young person and member(s) of staff involved in the restraint. As a result, the manager is unable to review and monitor restraint practice as a whole, as well as the impact on individual young people and staff.

The home has consulted with the fire authority to ensure adequate precautions against the risk of fire. However, there are insufficient fire drills to ensure that all young people know how to evacuate the home. This means that young people's safety and welfare is potentially compromised.

The home's overall appearance is greatly improved, with newly decorated rooms, new carpets and the implementation of a cleaning rota. This means that this requirement has been met.

Significant incidents are now consistently notified to Ofsted and all other relevant professionals as required. Therefore, the regulator can accurately assess how the home responds to complaints or allegations and determine whether appropriate action is being taken to safeguard young people's welfare.

Staff recruitment records are improved in line with the previous recommendation, thereby ensuring clear and full assessment of staff suitability.

The provider has ensured that Regulation 33 reports are sent to Ofsted. However, when visits take place, the views of young people, staff and parents are not

adequately recorded. As a result, the quality of care cannot be fully evaluated in the home.

The Registered Manager's own monitoring of the home is ineffective. This monitoring has failed to identify shortfalls and poor practice in the home. In addition, the internal monitoring system fails to consult with young people or stakeholders as part of its process.

Young people's records are incomplete, with case files not containing full information. In addition, some records are not dated or signed by the author of each written entry, making it difficult to see when they next need to be reviewed.

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 *Inspections of children's homes – framework for inspection* and the evaluation schedule for the inspection of children's homes.