

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC039087
Inspection date	25/07/2012
Inspector	Caroline Jones
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	19/03/2012
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2012

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is a 72-foot narrow boat that travels around the canal network. It provides care and accommodation for up to one young person with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is managed by a private company.

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.

At the previous full inspection, the home's overall effectiveness was judged as satisfactory. The service to young people continues to improve and all recommendations have been fully addressed and implemented in day-to-day practice. Improved monitoring allows for feedback and consultation with young people, their parents and staff to learn and improve practice further. Additionally staff supervision is now formalised and regular. Young people say that they like living on the narrow boat and management monitoring exercises also capture this view.

Young people make progress in managing their behaviour and developing relationships. Young people have experienced instability and chaos in their lives and the uniqueness of the service allows for intensive support for them to settle and gain control of their lives. They are engaging in education and completing competent crew courses to gain skills and certification with the boating association. Good direct work sessions focus young people upon their individual targets across the five outcomes framework and stimulate their motivation and confidence to progress. For example, the incidents of young people missing from home has reduced considerably which demonstrates the value of the work undertaken by staff and young people.

Staff receive safeguarding training, including child sexual exploitation, and have a good understanding of their duties in promoting young people's welfare. Young people have comprehensive risk assessments that are regularly reviewed to clearly manage and identify risks and vulnerabilities. Young people are actively included in this assessment to aid their understanding of safety. Close supervision of young people and proactive safeguarding practices have ensured that they have not engaged in any risk taking behaviours. Police missing from home coordinators confirm that staff exchange information, attend strategy meetings and work well within the protective network of professionals to safeguard young people. There has been one incident of missing from home which relates to a young person returning late after visiting friends.

Young people have a good understanding of children's rights and have used the complaint process successfully to resolve any dissatisfaction. This relates to an electronic games console being repaired. The Registered Manager reports that the home has good relationships with the boating community, of which they have been a part for twenty years. There are no recorded complaints from the neighbouring community. Young people comment: 'I like that people talk to you when you are on the boat and no one knows you are in care.'

The Registered Manager is suitably experienced and qualified in managing care practice. She is currently completing a NVQ in equality and diversity to enhance her understanding further. Internal and external monitoring activities have been improved and take account of young people, parents and staff views. The Registered Manager is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and has plans for development. This includes refurbishment and decoration of the home which has begun and is due to be completed in September 2012. Staff confirm that they enjoy their work and are well supported. They have regular training, supervision and appraisals to develop their competence and skills in providing a quality service to young people, although the views of young people are not sought during the appraisal process to ensure these are counted.

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 appraisals take into account any views of young people the service is providing for. (NMS 19.6)

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)*.