

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	18/02/2013
Inspector	Louisa Bayley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	14/06/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is owned by a registered charity. The home provides long-term accommodation for four young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

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**.

The home was judged as adequate overall at the inspection in June 2012. The home demonstrates its capacity to improve because it has met all of the four requirements and three of the four recommendations made at the full inspection.

The manager has updated the Statement of Purpose; it now accurately reflects the practice in the home through correct and current information. The manager now ensures that records kept in the home are signed and dated. This helps to provide a clear understanding of the chronology of events and recording and identifies those responsible for completing entries; which is helpful to young people and staff reviewing the records and documentation.

Staff in the home have now received the training in first aid and physical intervention they need to support them to work effectively with young people. There is a programme of training in place and staff review this regularly, to ensure the team are up to date with current practice and developments. There is a new complaints procedure. This ensures that confidentiality is maintained and actions taken in response to a complaint are clearly documented. There has been one minor

complaint, from a young person, since the previous inspection. The manager has responded to the issue and made changes to practice in the home as a result. This makes young people feel valued and listened to.

The home has benefited from a programme of redecoration and maintenance in response to a previous recommendation. New carpets and fresh colour schemes give a welcoming and warm feel, more akin to a family home. Additional work is planned and the improvements are on-going, giving young people a sense of value and pride in their home. The six monthly monitoring of the home is comprehensive and informative, now with identification of patterns and trends in behaviour. This means that managers and staff are now able to gain a better understanding of triggers for behaviour, which helps to reduce future incidents.

The manager has worked closely with social workers to plan transitions for young people leaving care. Staff make a positive contribution to pathway planning for young people and engage with transitions workers, to support young people to move on. In cases where the placing authority have not provided the home with the completed pathway plan, the manager is tenacious in following this up with the relevant professionals. Robust care plans take account of young people's needs; identifying the support they need to make successful transitions and disengage positively from the home.

The number of incidents of missing from care and unauthorised absence has decreased over time. The manager has now put an agreement in place between a young person and their social worker regarding visits to the young person following such incidents. However, there have been two incidents of unauthorised absence for young people when staff have not engaged a visit with the responsible authority. This means that there is still an inconsistent approach to assuring the well-being of young people following such incidents.

The manager has made a number of improvements in the home, providing effective leadership and contributing to positive outcomes for young people. The manager is proactive in following up issues of missing documentation and poor responses to communication with the placing authority. She advocates on behalf of young people who have not accessed visits or contact from their social workers; supporting them to exercise their rights to receive appropriate support. Ofsted has been informed of complaints and safeguarding issues. These have been resolved satisfactorily in conjunction with placing authorities and concluded by the local authority designated officer.

The home now benefits from having a Registered Manager in post. There has been an improvement in the monitoring of the effectiveness of the home. The independent visitor has started to consult parents as part of the monthly monitoring visits, which contributes to understanding the quality of care provided.

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 where a child goes missing and there is concern for their welfare, or at the request of a child, staff arrange a meeting between the child and the responsible authority to consider the reasons for the child going missing (NMS 5.9)

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*.