

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC040642
Inspection date	27/02/2012
Inspector	Tola Akinde-Hummel
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	03/11/2011
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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 children's home is owned and managed by a local authority. It provides accommodation for seven young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The home provides individually tailored care plans to support and help prepare young people for moving on to semi/independent living. This is enhanced through the provision of a semi-independence flat which supports transitional plans for young people moving on.

Progress

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

Staff offer an abundance of support to young people to help them develop practically and personally. Staff recognise young people's strengths and utilise these. Where young people lack confidence staff encourage and nurture them. Young people talk openly about their aspirations for the future and are assisted to find a path that will help them realise their personal and professional goals. One young person stated, 'People say I have changed in a positive way.' Another said, 'Staff support you, I am looking at work experience and also getting support from the virtual school.' On a practical level, staff know that some young people enjoy choosing soft furnishings and take an interest in clothes and fashion. A sewing machine has been purchased to help young people develop skills and make items cheaply. The aim is for young people to think and be creative on a budget.

Young people participate in a variety of activities to ensure they maintain good health. Activities include the gym and ice skating. Young people develop their independence through participation in household chores such as cooking, laundry and cleaning. Staff and young people sit together for meals. These are relaxed social occasions where the etiquette of communal dining is evident.

Young people undertake a programme of independent living which intensifies as they prepare to move into the semi-independent accommodation attached to the home. Young people understand that this transition is not automatic. Young people have to demonstrate over time a certain level of responsibility and maturity to qualify. Additional requirements are put in place by the home to help assess that young people are ready to move onto the next stage. One young person stated, 'I want to move into the semi-independent flat and prepare eventually for my own place.'

Staff receive high quality support from the deputy and the senior. Mandatory and specialist training such as restorative justice is provided. Supervision and team meetings are regular, enabling staff to fulfil their roles. The deputy and the senior have been managing the home on a day-to-day basis in the absence of the manager

for a number of months. The manager visits the home on a weekly basis and is kept abreast of any changes or development. It is hoped that the manager will return on a full-time basis by April 2012.

Recent records of sanctions show that these are not always fully completed. Records do not address the effectiveness of the sanction or explain why in some instances, two sanctions appear to have been given for the same misdemeanour.

The managers undertake regular evaluations of the service and quality of care they provide to young people. The annual consultation with parents is due in April 2012. Although the home is able to evidence such reviews, the half yearly report has not been forwarded to Ofsted.

The home has an innovative action plan in place to further develop the service. Briefly; staff have updated the independent placement plans to help young people track their own progress and development over a period of time. The measuring of outcomes will be more sophisticated and easier to track. The semi-independent flat will be revitalised and re launched in the near future. This will come into effect with a more detailed, 'How you going to live' booklet that encompasses far more practical skills than the previous version. Young people will work through and complete this booklet before moving on.

The home is participating in a gardening project. This includes a chef and a dietician to bring to life the relationship between home grown fruit and vegetables, tasty and healthy food. It is intended to be a project for staff as well as young people and involves some redesign of the garden with raised beds close to the kitchen. Young people will learn that they can reduce food costs and grow seasonal produce in small spaces.

The home has fully addressed two of the three recommendations made at the previous inspection. The stairwell as been recently decorated, this means the whole building now has the same high standard of decoration. Young people have all been part of a fire drill to ensure they know what to do in the event of a fire. This information is fully recorded. The recommendation to restrict public access at the rear of the home has not been fully met. The home is awaiting a health and safety assessment. This restriction of access is a priority as the public can walk through the back of the building and this causes young people to feel unsafe and vulnerable.

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
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17B (2001)	ensure that a full written record is made of measures of control, restraint or discipline as set out in the regulation and review the number and effectiveness of sanctions used (Regulation 17b (3))	30/03/2012
31 (2001)	ensure that all parts of the children's home used by children are secure from unauthorised access (Regulation 31 (2) (b))	30/04/2012
34 (2001)	supply to Ofsted a copy of the report on the review of the quality of care conducted by the registered person. (Regulation 34 (1) (2) (3))	30/03/2012

Recommendations

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