

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	16/10/2012
Inspector	Kevin Whatley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	19/07/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is run by a private organisation. It is registered to accommodate up to six young people of either gender who have emotional and behavioural difficulties and who are unable, for the moment, to live in a family setting. The home aims to support young people to return to family, move to foster carers or to move on to independent accommodation.

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 last inspection, carried out in July 2012, the home was judged as inadequate. 12 requirements were made relating to a number of key areas of care provision. These included ensuring the assessed needs of young people can be met by the home, that care planning and risk assessment processes were robust and accurate and that medication procedures were safe. There were also requirements made which considered the need for the educational and future training needs of young people to be addressed and for the monitoring of standards of care in the home to be more rigorous and effective. A monitoring visit to review the progress of action taken against these requirements was carried out last month. All of the requirements have now been met.

Young people are not admitted to the home unless their assessed needs can be reasonably met. Considerable improvements have been made to ensure the specific needs of young people are assessed more comprehensively before agreement is reached for them to move in. For example care planning processes now include a far

more detailed and accurate assessment of each young person and are now intrinsically linked to risk assessments, behaviour management plans and programmes of support. Such an approach enables good continuity of care, with staff being guided by plans which clearly identify the aims and objectives for each placement and their intended outcome.

The challenging or risk taking behaviours of young people are considered in detail with suitable strategies put in place to manage and reduce their vulnerabilities and risk. Significant improvements have been made to the process of assessing the risks young people may be to themselves or others. This has led to young people reducing the number of times when they have placed themselves at the risk of harm. Risk assessments now accurately reflect the concerning behaviours of young people at the point of admission and are fully incorporated into robust support plans. The home has successfully arranged multi-agency meetings with the local police and substance misuse teams with the aim of considering the wider problems of crime and anti-social behaviour in the local area. This, in turn, has resulted in a more cohesive approach in managing the risk taking behaviours of young people.

Staff receive a good level of training which matches the needs of young people being looked after. The training programme has been reviewed and now allows staff to attend events more easily. Similarly each member of staff has a training matrix which ensures their training needs are planned for and monitored more closely.

Medicines are stored and administered safely and accurately. Improvements have been implemented which has seen the number of homely medications kept being significantly reduced. A new recording format has been introduced which has culminated in the accurate checking and giving of medicines. Stock checks are now completed regularly and reviewed as part of routine monitoring procedures.

A focused approach ensures young people engage in education and further training and learning. Each young person has a dedicated personal education plan which confirms their statutory schooling needs. The organisations own education department play a lead role in liaising with local education providers to ensure suitable programmes of education are sought and provided. Attendance in education is good with staff also engaging young people in appropriate learning programmes when they are not in full time education. Similarly young people above statutory school age are supported to pursue placements at college and have been successful in attending vocational learning courses.

A comprehensive monitoring process ensures all aspects of care provision are routinely reviewed and considered. Significant improvements have been made to the format for reviewing care in the home by the organisation. This now includes clear evidence of consulting with young people, their families and placing social workers. Reviews are also conducted within the home by the management team on a monthly basis. A greatly improved report provides an analysis of trends and patterns of behaviour and staff responses to them including their effectiveness. As a result monitoring now provides an extremely good and objective overview of care standards with the views of young people taken fully into account. All monitoring

reports have been submitted to Ofsted as required, while notifications of significant events have been forwarded when necessary.

The organisation has clearly taken a swift, rigorous and thoughtful approach in addressing the substantial shortfalls identified at the last inspection. This has included the appointment of a new manager and a thorough review of care practices, care planning procedures and risk management processes.

Young people commented that they really enjoy living at the home, that they feel 'very safe' and, 'very well looked after'. Young people also said they are given, 'good advice' to keep themselves safe when not in the home. Staff confirmed they are supported in their roles and that significant improvements had been made since the last inspection. The home was found to be relaxed and welcoming.

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)*.