

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC043255
Inspection date	05/11/2012
Inspector	Caroline Oldham
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	09/05/2012
--------------------------------	------------

© 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

The home is managed and run by the local authority. It provides residential care for up to six young people with emotional and 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**.

At the previous inspection in May 2012 the overall quality rating for the service was judged as good, with three recommendations set.

The manager was asked, when monitoring the practice of the home, to produce a written report about any concerns and any patterns and trends that are identified in relation to specific incidents. In addition to a monthly checklist, a more detailed file is now in place. This gives much more consideration to specific issues. The manager now looks at the chronology of events and incidents to identify trends and is working towards producing a six monthly overview report. This more strategic overview informs further developments in practice, such as, improving the consistency of care and implementing more comprehensive assessments of young people. This ensures that the needs of both individuals and the group are met and that young people receive care that is of a high quality.

The records of sanctions and physical restraint now show that staff endeavour to have discussions with young people following an incident and that they are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour. Some young people reflect upon their actions, and, as a result, have significantly changed their behaviour. Staff

say, 'It is like having a new young person in the house.'

The home was asked to ensure that the wishes, feeling and views of children are taken into account in developing the home. Records show that young people now take the initiative for holding meetings in which they discuss aspects of group living within the home. In addition, staff now involve young people in projects, such as, devising a no smoking policy. This imaginative idea is supported by other agencies, such as, the fire service that came to talk to young people about this issue. Some young people are involved in meetings for looked after children within the county and others are involved in wider research. Consequently young people are now involved in all aspects of the running of the home at many different levels.

The manager and her team continue to make further developments to improve the standard of care. The staff team are dedicated to the care of the young people and continue to deliver highly individualised care.

Staff strive to ensure that each young person has an educational placement that meets their specific needs and support that placement in whatever way is necessary. Their approach is imaginative and successful. Some young people maintain attendance at their educational placements as a direct result of the support they receive. This helps young people grow enormously in confidence and they take pride in their new skills.

Young people are healthy due to receiving good healthcare. They regularly attend dental checks and medical appointments. Staff respect the individual wishes of each young person, such as, retaining a dentist of their own choice and pursuing activities that young people are interested in following. Young people have access to therapy and counselling, and are very well supported to attend appointments.

Staff aim to manage young people's behaviour through developing relationships and the use of positive rewards. Sanctions are usually instigated for damage to property and physical restraints are rare. However, the physical restraint record does not include details of any methods used to avoid the need for a restraint, and therefore it is not clear if the young person's behaviour could have been managed differently to de-escalate the situation. Generally young people behave well and some take responsibility for their behaviour.

Staff put appropriate strategies in place to keep young people safe, such as giving them guidance. They notify the appropriate authorities of significant events, although reports of such incidents do not always include sufficient details of the subsequent actions taken or of the outcomes. There are clear policies and procedures for responding to issues of concern, such as if young people go missing, and staff are aware of what they should do for each individual young person according to their plan. As a result, young people generally keep safe.

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
17B (2001)	ensure that where a measure of restraint is used on a child that the record includes details of any methods used to avoid the need to use that measure (Regulation 17B (4) (b))	16/11/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure that a written record is kept which includes details of the action taken, and the outcome of any action or investigation, following a notifiable event (NMS 24.2)

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)*.