

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	22/02/2012
Inspector	Tracy Murty
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	07/12/2011
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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 last full inspection of this service in December 2011, the overall effectiveness judgement was satisfactory. Four requirements and one recommendation were made as a result of that inspection. The Registered Manager and staff team have demonstrated continued improvement in quality of care and outcomes for young people. The home has addressed all requirements and the recommendation that were raised at the last inspection.

The staff team continue to work hard to meet young people's needs. Individual placement plans ensure that the holistic needs of young people are thoroughly considered. Good use of key work sessions enables young people to further develop skills and confidence. Young people have recently been away on holiday with staff as a group and spoke positively about the experience. Young people's attendance and engagement in educational provisions are good. One young person commented that they enjoyed attending school and felt supported by staff to do so.

Given the complex behavioural needs of the young people, use of restraint occurs in the home on a regular basis. Where such measures are used with young people, staff ensure that they record the duration of the restraint clearly. The staff team also

ensure that prior to taking the decision to use a restraint, they consider all other methods with the young person. Staff make accurate and detailed records of what measures they take to try and prevent the use of restraint with young people.

The Registered Manager and staff team are confident and competent in relation to ensuring that relevant persons receive notifications of any significant events in the home. Staff report confidence in the Registered Manager and their deputy, and in getting support and guidance from them on a daily basis. The deputy manager oversees all recordings and accounts made by the staff team on a weekly basis and checks that all relevant notifications have been made. The independent visitor also produces very detailed and comprehensive reports each month. These assist the staff team in ensuring that all necessary actions have been taken.

The staff team works hard to encourage young people to behave in a socially acceptable manner at all times. When the behaviour of young people is of concern or potentially dangerous to themselves or others, staff use restraint methods to prevent the young person being harmed or causing harm. Only staff trained in such techniques are allowed to perform restraints in the home. Young people are actively encouraged to discuss their concerns and issues with the staff, before restraint is used as a final measure. Young people report that staff try and prevent the need to use restraint wherever possible by talking with them and trying to calm them down. Staff use diversion and de-escalation techniques and no measure which could be deemed unreasonable or excessive is used at any time.

The Registered Manager produces detailed monthly reports, outlining the performance of the home and monitoring its effectiveness. The Registered Manager takes appropriate action on any recommendations made in the independent visitor reports. The Registered Manager has not sent in the required two copies of their report to Ofsted this year and a requirement has been made to address this shortfall.

The staff team works closely and with confidence to the joint missing from care protocols that are in place with the local authority and local police. Recording of all such incidents is detailed and completed in a timely manner, overseen by managers. The home has a returns interview procedure and format to be completed with each young person upon their return to the home. Staff are not completing these forms on all occasions however, and a recommendation has been made to address this issue.

The staff team work closely with young people and have planned and informal meetings to discuss their progress whilst living in the home. Young people report feeling clear as to what their individual plans are and how staff support them to achieve goals. One young person stated that since moving to this home, they have begun to learn and develop independence skills. Young people are encouraged to undertake basic tasks, such as washing their own clothes, keeping their rooms tidy and preparing simple meals. Young people do not routinely comment on or sign their placement plans or incident reports in the records kept by the home. A recommendation has been made to address this shortfall. Young people report confidence in how the staff deal with their behaviours and state that they feel any disciplinary measures or sanctions used are appropriate and fair. The recording of

their comments in formal records held is not routinely sought however, and a recommendation has been made to address this shortfall.

Young people living in this home have a variety of social activities to take part in and receive money to take part in activities each weekend. Each young person has their own bedroom, furnished and decorated to a very high standard. Staff encourage young people to decide their own colour schemes for their rooms and to personalise their rooms according to their own tastes. Young people are allowed to have domestic pets and encouraged to care for them as part of learning to be responsible citizens. Meals are varied and healthy, with young people contributing to the menu plans each week.

A highly dedicated and committed staff team ensures that young people feel safe and are safe. Staff receive regular and good quality supervision and training appropriate to their roles and needs. One member of staff stated that they felt very supported by the Registered Manager and deputy. They stated that staff morale in the home is very good and the staff work positively together to ensure the best possible outcomes for young people. Regular team meetings take place and cover a wide range of items. A recent meeting included a guest presenter who undertook some artwork with staff. Young people have also recently produced some excellent graffiti work at the home, with the assistance of a local organisation.

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
34 (2001)	supply to HMCI a report in respect of any review conducted by the registered person. Two copies of Regulation 34 reports should be submitted to Ofsted each year. (Regulation 34 (2))	06/04/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure that written records kept by the home when a child goes missing, detail action taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return, any reasons given by the child for running away from the home, and any action taken in the light of those reasons. This information is shared with the responsible authority and where appropriate, their parents (NMS 5.10)

- ensure that where any sanctions, disciplinary measures or restraint are used, children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records kept by the home (NMS 3.18)
- ensure that children are actively encouraged to read their files, other than confidential or third party information, and to correct errors and add personal statements. This is with particular reference to ensuring children read and comment on their placement plans and incident logs. (NMS 22.5)

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)*.