

## Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC049189        |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 02/02/2012      |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Mandy Williams  |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Interim         |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home |

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| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 13/10/2011 |
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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

|                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Good progress</b>         | 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. |
| <b>Satisfactory progress</b> | 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.                                  |
| <b>Inadequate progress</b>   | 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 home provides care and accommodation for up to three young people of either sex, aged between 11 and 17 years, who may be experiencing emotional or behavioural difficulties. The home is owned and managed by a private company.

### Progress

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

At the last full inspection in October 2011, the overall effectiveness of the home was rated as good. At this time Ofsted asked the provider to make improvements in two areas. This was in relation to ensuring that young people have a personal education plan to promote their educational achievement and that young people's care plans be reviewed and revised, when required.

The Registered Manager has been proactive in relation to pursuing the appropriate local authorities in relation to the completion of personal education plans and some young people now have these in place. The Registered Manager has undertaken all avenues open to them to address this issue. Young people resident in the home do have recently-updated care and placement plans.

Since the last inspection the home has tried hard to engage young people who are not currently in formal education in activities that would be of interest to them. The initiative was designed to give them a sense of achievement, help improve their self-confidence and steer young people away from those in the community who exert a negative influence on them. This included a planned 'karting' project that not only included driving but also had a focus on diet and fitness. However, despite their best efforts, the staff have not yet been successful in getting young people to engage in this project.

Both the external and internal monitoring of the home is undertaken regularly and Ofsted has received routinely records of both. These serve to highlight any issues for the home to address. For example, these highlighted that the home was in need of some maintenance work and redecoration. This area for improvement was still evident at the time of the inspection. The Registered Manager is aware of the need to address this. The home is warm and clean but the improvements in décor required do detract from the general homely feel to the building.

Young people's meetings take place on a weekly basis and the home has devised a survey form that young people can opt to complete at any other time. This ensures that young people have a voice in the home and that staff are aware of their views and wishes. A similar survey form is also in place to ascertain the views of young

people's families and their social workers. One parent commented about the home's communication with them by saying, 'they keep us in contact with everything X is doing, we are always kept informed.' This ensures that everyone involved with a young person is aware of the current issues and promotes a consistent approach.

There have been a significant number of incidents of young people going missing from care since the last inspection. The home has an agreed protocol with the local authority and young people have the opportunity to meet with an independent advocate on their return. The Registered Manager is also enlisting the support of a manager from another home who calls in regularly on an informal basis, to discuss these incidents with young people. The Registered Manager is appropriately concerned about the young people and the escalation of these incidents; there are plans in place to address this issue in a multi-agency forum.

The home maintains a record of sanctions that appear fair and reasonable. These include the temporary removal of stereo speakers for playing loud music late at night. Young people have the opportunity to comment on the sanction imposed and indicate that they feel they are fair and reasonable. However, the record book maintained by the home is not currently a numbered volume. This would provide additional safeguards by ensuring that the records cannot be removed after the event.

## **Areas for improvement**

### **Recommendations**

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

- ensure the children's home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated throughout (NMS 10.3)
- ensure that the record that the home keeps to record any measures of control, in particular sanctions, are in a format that cannot be tampered with, such as a bound and numbered volume. (Volume 5, statutory guidance, para 2.91)