

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	19/02/2013
Inspector	Paula Lahey
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	10/05/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This privately owned home provides care and accommodation for up to five young people, who may have emotional and behavioural problems. Some young people may also have specific learning disabilities.

The provision is registered with the Department for Education to provide education on site for young people who live in one of the three homes run by the provider.

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 **satisfactory progress**.

At the full inspection in May 2012, the overall rating was judged to be good. Action has been taken to address the previous requirement and recommendations made at the inspection. The home continues to provide a quality service and good outcomes for young people. One requirement and three recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection.

There is effective monitoring of young people's placements, where managers carefully analyse each person's progress against their individual placement aims. Creative strategies to support young people's development, and improvements to the service are identified, and acted on. Since the last inspection reports of the manager's monitoring have been provided to Ofsted, affording external oversight of the service evaluation.

There has been a notable improvement in young people being formally debriefed following behaviour incidents. Detailed records are now maintained which evidence how the young person has been supported to reflect on the incident. On a small number of occasions, one of the adults who has been involved in, or a witness to, the incident has facilitated the debriefing. This does not promote an independent view of the event.

Staff receive regular training and good quality guidance to support young people with developing positive behaviour. The use of physical intervention is minimal and techniques used remain the least restrictive. However, on one occasion staff used a physical guide alongside verbal prompting to require a young person to comply with a given instruction which is not consistent with minimum standards.

In the main, the home has an excellent record of working in partnership with local safeguarding agencies. However, on one occasion recently, a concern about practice during a physical intervention had not been shared with the local area designated officer. This limits opportunity for an independent overview of the incident.

Young people have been involved in helping to make the communal areas of the provision more appealing. The lounge now has a coffee table, low-level lighting, pictures, new carpet, plants and soft furnishings. Padlocks that were previously on cupboards have been removed. The layout of the house has been revised. There is now a clear divide between the areas for use by the school and the residential environment. Additionally, the lounge has been improved to provide young people with a games and computer area as well as space to watch the television and relax. Young people are positive about these developments and find the house more homely and welcoming.

As part of internal monitoring, the team identified that the current sanction and reward system needed review. As a result, a new reward system was implemented at the beginning of February 2013. It has already had a positive effect at promoting young people's self-esteem and positive behaviour, notably by a significant reduction in the use of sanctions.

Staff continue to support young people to express their views and opinions and 'have a say' in the running of the home. Young people decided to implement a weekly cooking and washing-up rota and have started to keep daily diaries recoding their time in the home. Young people have been involved in the recruitment of new staff. This includes devising and asking questions during interview and providing managers with feedback on the suitability of candidates. Young people said that that it was nice to be included and that it was much better to meet new staff before they started work in the home.

Young people benefit from the positive relationship the home has with their families and placing authorities. Partnership working is evident, regular contact is maintained and stakeholders are kept up to date with young people's progress and development. In addition, they are informed of significant events that young people are involved in and the action taken to safeguard them. However, it is noted that these have not all

been shared with Ofsted in line with regulation.

Young people achieve good outcomes and can reflect on their progress since coming to live in the home. Young people have constructive relationships with the staff team and in particular are positive about their key workers. The house supervisor has recently changed the staff-working pattern to provide young people with greater consistency.

Young people are actively engaged in a range of activities and opportunities to further their social and personal development. All young people are engaged with learning and have good educational opportunities. Young people thrive in a positive atmosphere where they receive regular praise and encouragement for their achievements.

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
30 (2001)	ensure that if any of the events listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 5 takes place, the registered person shall without delay notify the persons indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table. (Regulation 30 (1))	01/04/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure that any child who has been restrained is given the opportunity to be debriefed by a responsible adult who has not been involved in the restraint incident and to talk through their experience within 24 hours (Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 2.103)
- ensure that restraint is not used to force compliance with instructions where significant harm or serious damage to property are not otherwise likely (NMS 3.14)
- ensure that allegations against people that work with children are reported by the designated person to the LADO. This includes allegations that on the face of it may appear relatively insignificant. (NMS 20.6)

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*.