

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC061232
Inspector	Clare Davies
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Bristol City Council
Registered person address	Bristol City Council, Director of Legal Services City Hall, College Green BRISTOL BS1 5TR
Responsible individual	Karen Mary Gazzard
Registered manager	Tracy Connolly
Date of last inspection	29/04/2014

Inspection date	09/10/2014
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **declined in effectiveness**.

The staff team does not promote the safety and welfare of the young people in the home. Staff lack the skills to deal with challenging behaviour in a consistent manner. Young people show little regard for boundaries and display anti-social behaviour in the home and in the community. As a consequence, staff and young people have sustained physical injuries.

The admission's process is poor. Managers fail to consider the impact of admitting new residents into the mix of young people already living at the home. One such unplanned admission into an already unsettled environment led to young people becoming uncontrollable, causing damage to the home, attempting to light fires and threatening and physically assaulting staff. Police intervention to manage behaviour in the home is necessary as a result of the staff team's ineffective strategies to manage poor or challenging behaviour.

Young people are not always safely restrained. Records of restraint are not as detailed as other incident records. For example, incidents of restraint could not be found in the log book of physical interventions even when these restraints are referred to in incident reports. Sanctions given do not always reflect the unacceptable behaviour displayed by young people. For example, a young person's bus pass may be denied as a consequence of disruptive behaviour at bedtime. It is unclear of the effectiveness of such sanctions as the manager does not evaluate their impact on the young person's behaviour.

The staff team does not follow up incidents of young people missing from the home with sufficient care. Staff fail to verify the whereabouts of young people when they are away overnight. This poor practice does not provide sufficient safeguards to young people and demonstrates a lack of care. Consequently, some young people spend very little time at the home and are not present for regular meals. The staff

team has minimal information to understand how such young people are managing to have their personal needs met each day and lack the curiosity to find out where the young people are and ensure that they are safe.

Managers have failed to deal with all of the shortfalls identified following the previous inspection. Record-keeping in respect of incidents of missing from home are insufficient. In addition, policy guidance in respect of young people missing from care is not current and does not incorporate the guidance from the Department of Education issued in January 2014 and therefore lacks detail on preventative approaches.

The staff team does not deal with young people missing from the home in the same way. For some young people, there are individual protocols to follow but not for others. Staff report that this system has improved of late, providing greater clarity on what action to take and when. Risk management meetings are held with regards to young people who are frequently missing from care. These meetings identify additional resources to support young people such as group work or individual sessions with specialist workers. However, such meetings have not occurred for all young people, resulting in a lack of preventative measures.

Records are not efficiently stored and maintained by managers and staff. As a result, it is difficult to collate information and identify patterns and trends. A folder set up to store copies of any notification to Ofsted and any reports of young people reported as missing from care has information missing. The failure to submit all notifications stored on the computer prevents Ofsted from being fully aware of significant incidents taking place at the home.

Leaders and managers fail to monitor sufficiently the quality of care at this home. Records lack sufficient detail. Not all placement plans are current. The manager has not identified these omissions through the monitoring systems. The absence of comprehensive monitoring has resulted in leaders and managers not being fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Consequently, they do not have an effective plan to improve and develop this home.

Monthly monitoring visits by an independent person do not regularly take place. The manager reports that there were no visits for May and June 2014. In July and August 2014, an independent person completed visits to scrutinise the quality of care that the children's home provides. Visits that have taken place identify shortfalls in relation to behaviour management, young people smoking and physical intervention. The manager has not drawn up an action plan in response to these shortfalls. Monthly monitoring reports are not submitted to Ofsted as required by the regulations.

Managers and the staff team do not promote the health care needs of the young people. Young people who continue to smoke do not receive support to help them

stop and have attempted to smoke in their bedrooms. They often have lighters in their possession. The staff team lacks a co-ordinated response to manage this behaviour. The rules about smoking are unclear.

The environment has improved since the previous inspection. Blinds are now fitted to windows and some bedrooms have new laminated wooden floors and have been decorated. Further decoration is planned. Fire door mechanisms at the bottom of the stairs have been reviewed by a surveyor and a magnetic fitting is to be installed to prevent this fire door being propped open and posing a risk to fire safety.

The home has a staff training plan. Training has been completed on e-safety and safeguarding. However, the effectiveness of this training is poor given the failings identified at this inspection. Training in awareness and prevention of child sexual exploitation training is planned for November 2014. The manager in partnership with the local police has completed a community assessment on the location of the home to confirm that the location of the home does not pose additional risks to young people.

Social workers report that the quality of communication with this home differs according to which member of the staff team they deal with. They receive weekly summaries and notification of significant incidents. The weekly summaries vary considerably in quality. One social worker reports that she is frustrated that after having completed a pathway plan with a young person, this document was mislaid in the home. Another reported that working with families and arranging appropriate contact is a strength of this home.

Information about this children's home

This home provides care and accommodation for up to five young people who may have emotional or behavioural difficulties. The home is managed by the local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/04/2014	Full	good
23/01/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
03/10/2013	Full	good
09/01/2013	Interim	good progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

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
11 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is conducted so as to promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated there (Regulation 11 (1)(a))	13/11/2014
16 (2001)	prepare and implement a missing child policy. In particular, ensure the policy reflects the latest guidance from the government (Regulation 16 (4)(b))	13/11/2014
17A (2001)	ensure that when a measure of restraint is used on a child accommodated in the children's home the measure of restraint must be proportionate, and no more force than is necessary is used (Regulation 17A(2))	13/11/2014
17B (2001)	prepare and implement a written policy (in this regulation referred to as the "behaviour	13/11/2014

	management policy") which sets out the means whereby appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the home (Regulation 17B (1)(b))	
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose (Regulation 17B (3))	13/11/2014
28 (2001)	maintain in respect of each child who is accommodated in a children's home a record in permanent form which includes the information, documents and records specified in Schedule 3 relating to that child (Regulation 28 (1)(a)&(b))	13/11/2014
29 (2001)	maintain in the children's home the records specified in Schedule 4 and ensure that they are kept up to date. In particular a record in the form of a register showing in respect of each child accommodated in a children's home (Regulation 29 Schedule 4 (1))	13/11/2014
30 (2001)	ensure that if any of the events listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 5 take 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))	13/11/2014
33 (2001)	ensure that visits by the independent person, shall take place at least once a month and may be unannounced (Regulation 33 (7))	13/11/2014
33 (2001)	provide a copy of the independent person's report to HMCI. In particular, within the specified timescales (Regulation 33 (9)(a))	13/11/2014
34 (2001)	establish and maintain a system for improving the quality of care provided in the children's home. (Regulation 34 (1)(b))	13/11/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure that sanctions and rewards for behaviour are clear, reasonable and fair and are understood by all staff and children (NMS 3.8)
- ensure that children's physical, emotional and social development needs are promoted. In particular, actively discourage smoking and provide support to stop (NMS 6.1)
- ensure that the learning and development programme is evaluated for effectiveness at least annually and if necessary is updated. (NMS 18.2)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information 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 main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.