

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC061232
Inspection date	23/01/2014
Inspector	Peter Harrell
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	03/10/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

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.

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**.

The overall effectiveness of this service was judged as good in October 2013. Two requirements and four recommendations were made at the full inspection. This interim inspection identifies satisfactory progress for this service. The home has suitably addressed all of the requirements, although three out of the four recommendations have been met. There is one repeated recommendation and three new good practice recommendation resulting from this interim inspection.

An up to date missing persons protocol needs to be in place together with ensuring all information following a notifiable event is kept in one place, It is recommended that the service carries out a full audit of record keeping and recording includes more legible case record entries.

At the last inspection, toxic substances were removed from the communal toilet. No cleaning substances were present at inspection and the Registered Manager was clear that this was not going to be repeated, all staff were informed regarding this situation. The complaints folder now contains actions taken following complaints and

concerns raised either from the young people or from people outside of the children's home.

In order to enhance the homely feel the home tries to create, the recommendation related to improving the environment where children live has been achieved; a detailed programme of maintenance remains in place. The repositioning of a large communal table which was in the entrance to the home has created a brighter more welcoming entrance space within the home.

Team meeting minutes are no longer recorded by an administrator and from conversations with staff the morale within a very stable staff team has improved since the last inspection.

Notifiable incidents are sent to Ofsted and the appropriate authorities. However, the details of this incident are not recorded in a central place. This shortfall is repeated and if not remedied, has the potential to impact upon the safety and vulnerability of young people. In addition entries in children's case records are not always recorded in legible handwriting.

Procedures are in place for young people who go missing or are absent from the home without permission, but the protocol document between the service, as a local authority children's home, and the police has still not been updated and at the time of the inspection the Registered Manager was referring to a relatively old document. It is therefore recommended that this is updated to reflect recent legislative and practice developments which are in place to safeguard the welfare and minimise the vulnerability of missing young people.

The management and stable staff team at this home are very supportive of each other. Members of staff are provided with regular supervision, team meetings and regular and relevant training opportunities; these provide them with the appropriate skills to support young people and to meet the objectives contained in their individual care plans.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that if a child is absent from the home and their whereabouts is not known, the home's procedures are compatible with and have regard to current Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) protocols and procedures maintained and managed by the police or by the local authority for the area where the home is located (NMS 5.6)
- make sure that entries in records are legible and signed and dated. (NMS 22.4)
- ensure that information about the child is recorded clearly and in a way which

will be helpful when they access their files now or in the future (NMS 22.5).

- ensure that a clear written record is kept which includes details of the action taken and the outcome of 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*.