

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC061439
Inspection date	03/10/2013
Inspector	Dennis Bradley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	20/06/2013
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2013

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is run by a private company and provides care and accommodation for up to five young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties, or learning disabilities, or mental disorders.

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 home was judged to be adequate at the last full inspection. Since then staff have made satisfactory progress to improve the service. One requirement and six recommendations were made at the last inspection. One of the recommendations is no longer applicable. Action has been taken to address the requirement and three of the recommendations. Staff make sure young people receive appropriate support and encouragement to attend and engage in their education. This will help them to reach their potential and achieve economic wellbeing. Staff also ensure young people take part in suitable activities within the home such as watching age appropriate DVD's. This helps prevent young people from engaging in activities that could have a detrimental effect on them. Suitable arrangements are in place to ensure staff receive regular fire instruction and this will help protect young people from the risk of fire.

Arrangements are also now in place to ensure staff are given the opportunity to be debriefed following any incidents where a young person has been subject to physical restraint. This helps ensure they can contribute to any strategies developed to

prevent the recurrence of such incidents. However, the home's restraint records do not include confirmation that the staff involved have been spoken to and staff do not always record details of any action they took to avoid using physical restraint. This makes it more difficult to ascertain whether it was used as a last resort after other approaches had failed. Also, with regard to the two incidents that have occurred since the last inspection staff did not clearly record whether the young person has been given the opportunity to be medically checked after the incident. It is evident from the records of these two incidents that staff only used physical restraint to protect the young person or others from harm.

A recommendation regarding young people's risk assessments has been partly met. Risk assessments now address each young person's risk taking behaviour and this helps to keep them safe. It was also recommended that staff should ensure young people's risk assessments are kept up to date. However, the risk assessments for one young person have not been updated in light of additional information regarding their risky behaviours. Also, young people's risk assessments do not always clearly identify the action that staff should take to minimise the risks. For example, with regard to the use of social network sites, one risk assessment only states that staff will provide the young person with advice and guidance, which is not sufficiently explicit. Also, young people's risk assessments relating to bullying behaviour only contain general strategies based on the home's policy, rather than individual strategies based on each young person's needs. Implementing comprehensive risk assessments based on young people's individual needs helps to keep young people safe.

A recommendation that the person carrying out monthly external monitoring visits to the home should regularly consult the parents or relatives of the young people has not been addressed. This means their opinions or suggestions about how the home is run and young people are cared for still do not regularly form part of this monitoring process. This recommendation will be repeated.

There are satisfactory systems for the internal monitoring of the home and the quality of care provided to the young people. The manager ensures these are implemented and completes written reports about the outcome of their monitoring of the service. There are also arrangements in place for the home to consult young people, parents and professionals about the running of the home. However, the manager's reports do not refer to the outcomes of this consultation, or how this is taken into account in developing the service.

Young people have appropriate opportunities to participate in decisions about their day-to-day lives and future. Although they currently choose not to take part in house meetings arranged by the staff they confirmed when asked that staff seek their views about their care and the running of the home. They said staff respect their views and wishes. The manager explained that plans are underway to redecorate parts of the home at the request of the young people. The home's vehicle has also been replaced at their request. Young people also confirmed that they are actively involved in planning their care and future. This helps them feel valued and included.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure if any staff in the home resort to any measure of control or restraint this is carefully and clearly recorded with full details by the staff involved and within 24 hours (Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 2.91)
- ensure that any young person who has been restrained is given the opportunity to be medically checked afterwards and encouraged to accept this (Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 2.102)
- ensure young people's safety and welfare is promoted. In particular, ensure young people's individual risk assessments are up-to-date, and clearly identify the strategies to protect them (NMS4.1)
- ensure that, during visits carried out under Regulation 33, the person carrying out the visits speaks in private with the parents or relatives of young people living at the home (NMS 21.7)
- ensure that reports completed under Regulation 34 clearly refer to how the views of young people, their families and placing authorities about the operation of the home, are taken into account. (NMS 21.1 and Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 2.27)

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*.