

Children's homes - monitoring

Inspection date	21/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC061837
Type of inspection	Monitoring
Inspector	Andrew Hewston

This monitoring visit

The purpose of this monitoring visit was to respond to concerns following a large fire within the barn next to the home, which is within a rural area. Concerns have been raised relating to risk assessments within one of the organisations other homes. The home has also sent in notifications that highlight a range of concerning behaviours displayed by the young people. The previous requirement and recommendation relating to complaints and external visitors to the home were not examined in sufficient detail to ensure that these areas have been met. An investigation into the fire is being completed by the Police and Fire service. An additional internal review of the fire and the staff's response is being completed by one of the home's directors.

Examination of individualised risk assessments and the Safe Area Report (locality risk assessment) highlights that there has been insufficient review of the risk assessment and it does not reflect the increased risks to children and young people given that the barn was being used to store hay. There is no detail as to the specific risks associated with the barn, especially in relation to the risk of fire, given recent incidents in the children's home. It is also identified that a note has been placed on the front of the 'Safe Area Report' requesting all staff read and sign the document. Only six out of 14 staff have signed that they had read this report. There was also missing signatures from the registered manager and the deputy manager. Although individual risk assessments detail recent incidents, including the young people playing and smoking in the barns prior to the serious fire incident of 6 March 2016, there are no details recorded in the 'Safe Area Report' regarding the risk of fire in this area. Given the young people's recent behaviour, the 'Safe Area Report' was found to contain insufficient detail as to the specific risk of fire. This along with a lack of staff awareness of the 'Safe Area Report' posed significant risks to children and young people.

The admission of one young person since the fire has been appropriately completed. Information sent to the home prior to their arrival was sufficient to produce an assessment of the needs of the new young person in comparison with the behaviours and needs of those already accommodated. Placement planning has been completed and links well to those areas raised by the placing social worker within previous reviews and the admissions meeting.

Notifications have not been sent to Ofsted in a timely manner. A safeguarding incident on the 4 March was not reported until 14 March, and three safeguarding events from mid-February took three weeks to be reported to Ofsted. The incidents and discussions with the Registered Manager, and deputy, highlight poor relationships between staff and young people. Staff have been reminded to work in a way that supports both their safety and that of the young people's. However, an increase in physical interventions, a large number of complaints being made, and young people being overheard colluding in an attempt to get staff suspended show the decline in positive work being completed. One discussion with the Registered

Manager relating to the possible suspension of a staff member, highlights their lack of awareness of the organisations own safeguarding policy. A response from the Designated Officer (LADO) following an allegation suggested that staff require additional training in the use of alternatives to restraint. This has since been completed by staff.

Information about this children's home

The home is one of four children's home within a privately run organisation. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

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

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 (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered manager must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39.3)	29/02/2016
11: The positive relationships standard In order to meet the positive relationships standard the registered person must ensure that 11.1 children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— (a) mutual respect and trust; (b) an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and (c) positive responses to other children and adults.	22/04/2016
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered manager must ensure that within the stated time-scale 12 2a) that staff— (i) assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child.	22/04/2016

13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard is the registered person must enable, inspire and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— (a) lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;	22/04/2016
The registered manager must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). (Regulation 46.1)*	22/04/2016
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there (Regulation 40. 4(c))	22/04/2016

* These requirements are subject to statutory requirement notice.

Recommendations

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

- ensure that reports are sent to HMCI through referring to the non-statutory advice about visits by independent persons: Children's homes regulation amendments 2014: Advice for children's homes providers on new duties under regulations that came in to effect in January and April 2014. (The Guide to the Quality Standards page 66, paragraph 15.10)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the home since their last Ofsted inspection. It was also completed in response to a recent fire in the barn near to the home.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

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