

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC062013
Inspection date	30/01/2014
Inspector	Stephen Trainor
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	03/06/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

A private organisation operates this children's home. It is registered to care for up to 3 young people, of both genders. The home cares for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

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 previous inspection on 3 June 2013 the home's overall effectiveness was judged to be good. The children's home has maintained a good quality of care between inspections and this has secured some positive outcomes for young people. One young person was able to move to semi-independence and another young person made a successful transition to another children's home. Both these young people remain stable in their placements.

The home had a period of time between October and January when there were no children on roll. A referral accepted to the home during this period ended within a few hours after the young person's needs were deemed to need specialist mental health support. The home's Registered Manager was also redeployed to another service operated by the organisation on 16 December 2013. The home remained closed until 20/01/2013.

This home does not have a Registered Manager at present. Ofsted have been

advised that an individual had been identified to manage the children's home, however this application remains outstanding. The responsible individual has kept Ofsted appraised of the home's status throughout this period.

The home has recently reopened and suitable contingency arrangements are in place pending the permanent appointment of a new manager. The service reopened to provide a single occupancy placement for one young person. The home's statement of purpose needs to be reviewed and adjusted to reflect the new service aims.

The staff team appointed is only at the early forming stage. The team is presently supported by agency staff. No more than half the staff that are on duty are from an external agency. The preference for the home's management is to appoint full time staff and recruitment is underway.

There is limited evidence that the current placement at the home is successful for the young person concerned, having developed good relationships with staff. Suitable plans including education and contact arrangements have been established. Placement plans and risk assessments were being developed in line with known and presenting needs.

There have been no behaviour management issues. The young person confirmed she was happy and safe with the present arrangements. The home provides a child-focused service that supports young people to lead a stable lifestyle and this allows them to plan for their futures and develop their potential. Young people regularly reflect on their progress with staff and this keeps them motivated.

Three recommendations set at the last inspection have been addressed or were no longer applicable. The changes made to the staff team meant it was no longer possible to track if past team members had completed their level 3 qualification. The new staff team details are not yet outlined within the home's Statement of Purpose. The living environment at the home had seen some redecoration and refurbishment. Work carried out ensures a pleasant first impression. Young people were seen to be relaxed in their home. Procedures for monitoring the service had been improved. A new report format was introduced for Regulation 33 visits. Reports provide clearer evaluations on the home's operation and quality of staff practice. Not all reports had been forwarded to Ofsted during the time the home was closed.

There is an effective system in place to notify persons and appropriate authorities of the occurrence of significant events. Four notifications were reported transparently and no complaints were investigated by Ofsted between inspections. The home's management team showed that it is perceptive in identifying the home's strengths and the areas where it could perform better.

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
5 (2001)	ensure the home's Statement of Purpose is kept under review; specifically, ensure the overall aims of the home's present service, a single occupancy placement, is made clear and ensure the staffing details are clearly outlined (Regulation 5(a) Schedule 1 points 1 & 5)	28/02/2014
7 (2001)	ensure the registered provider appoints an individual to manage the children's home (Regulation 7 (1))	28/02/2014
33 (2001)	ensure that external monitoring visits are undertaken monthly with copies of reports sent to Ofsted within the recommended timescale. (Volume 5 Section 3.12)	28/02/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure the overall number, competence and deployment of staff, both as a staff group and non individual shifts, can fulfil the home's Statement of Purpose and meet the individual needs of the children resident in the home; in particular, staff vacancies are filled with permanent staff reducing the reliance on agency staff members (NMS 17.1)
- ensure the home has and implements a written policy that clarifies the purpose, format and content of information to be kept on the registered person's files and information to be kept on the child's file; in particular, admissions and discharge book, placement plans and risk assessments are accurate and up to date. (NMS 22.1)

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*.