

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	07/01/2013
Inspector	Deirdra Keating
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	29/06/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home provides care and accommodation for up to five young people aged between 11 and 16 years, who may have emotional or behavioural difficulties. The home accepts both planned and emergency placements and is owned 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**.

At the last full inspection in June 2012 the home was judged as satisfactory. Following this the manager and staff worked tirelessly to address the identified shortfalls and improve the quality of care. However, there has been continued pressure on the service to take new placements, while staff have been challenged to manage the needs of the existing young people. This has meant that the quality of care has been generally maintained as opposed to improved. There is a growing culture of unacceptable behaviour, damage to the property and as a result staff morale is low. Records demonstrate that staff expect young people to be accountable for their actions, although, young people's views are not sought following sanctions. This means that opportunities to reflect on causes of behaviours may be overlooked. Action has been taken to ensure that changes are made with immediate effect. The registered manager has met with senior managers, social workers and young people to ensure that group dynamics change and behaviours improve.

The two previous requirements have been fully met. The review of care has been

received and includes consultation with all relevant stakeholders. Significant improvements to the environment include; on-going repairs, repainting the exterior walls, fresh interior paint work, new carpets and new furniture in young people's bedrooms. Overall, the environment is well maintained promoting a homely and clean house in which young people are comfortable.

Meal times have improved with evening meals being eaten communally in the kitchen or dining room. However, the care of the environment has not improved and this recommendation has been raised in part again. Young people benefit from independent access to their rooms using electronic fob bands, purchased in line with their preferences. This promotes their responsibility and independence.

Staff shifts have been considered by the wider organisation and senior managers. Working times remain unchanged, although, work has been undertaken to change the evening settling times. Staff consulted with young people who agreed to earlier bedtimes. This was implemented successfully for a period and the involvement of young people promotes their self-awareness. However, during the recent school holidays young people have been unsettled at night, which could compromise future school attendance.

Staff ensure that young people are registered with health professionals without delay. Appointments are made and outcomes and follow up appointments recorded. Support with smoking cessation is offered and supported by the recent no smoking on site rule. This encourages young people to make more informed choices regarding their health.

Young people spoken to say they are happy living in the home and that while there are difficult dynamics within the group they believe staff will address these. Young people's attendance in education has improved and there is a reduction in risk taking behaviours. The number of people going missing has decreased. Overall, young people's safety is a priority.

The home provides a caring, welcoming environment where staff strive to meet young people's needs. Staff are under pressure to take additional placements without the resources and time to fully meet their needs. There is a united and dedicated staff team who despite many setbacks continue to work together to improve the environment and potential outcomes for young people.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure the children's home only provides admission to children whose assessed needs they can reasonably expect to meet (NMS 11.2)
- ensure that the environment and culture promotes models and supports positive

behaviour in regard to care of the environment (NMS 3.2)

- ensure that where sanctions or disciplinary measures are used, children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records kept by the home. (NMS 3.18)

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*.