

Children's home – Monitoring visit

Inspection date	14/06/2016
Unique reference number	SC063110
Type of inspection	Monitoring
Inspector	Ashley Hinson

This monitoring visit

Ofsted undertook an interim inspection on 8 January 2016, resulting in a judgement of declined effectiveness. An investigation visit took place on 21 March 2016 following receipt of concerns raised with Ofsted by a third party. This resulted in the issue of two compliance notices and a restriction of accommodation order. On 17 May 2016, two inspectors completed a full inspection, resulting in an overall judgement of requires improvement. The inspection found that the home had made progress in relation to the identified shortfalls.

On 14 June 2016, a monitoring visit took place. The purpose of this visit was to evaluate the progress made by the provider in addressing some of the concerns identified at the full inspection, in particular, the quality of risk assessments, the provision of staff supervision, and the quality of the premises and placement matching decisions. In addition, the inspector considered the staffing arrangements. This monitoring visit found that the provider has made progress in addressing some of the concerns identified at the full inspection. Further improvement is needed.

Risk assessments have improved. They are now much clearer. However, they need further improvement to be good enough. Some sections still use ambiguous language. There are gaps in information about potential triggers. For example, the manager cites family contact as a contributor to difficult behaviour for one child, but the risk assessment does not refer to this. This has the potential to limit staff's awareness of the increased risk when the child has contact with her family.

The management team has made progress in relation to completing impact assessments prior to making placement decisions. The manager has considered two young people for possible accommodation. He decided the home was not able to meet the needs of one child effectively, given the existing staffing levels. This is reassuring. The manager confirmed that he has been under no pressure to take children. He has admitted one new resident since the full inspection. This is the first new admission since the lifting of the restriction of accommodation. The impact assessment explored the impact that the placement may have on other children and whether there were any additional staffing needs arising from the proposed placement. As a result, decisions about whether or not to accept a child are more robust and therefore offer children greater protection.

The majority of staff have had supervision since the full inspection. There has also been further training for staff in physical interventions. However, there have been occasions when there have been no staff on shift overnight who are trained in physical interventions techniques, despite working with children who at times behave in an aggressive way and whose risk assessments note the potential need for physical interventions to keep them safe. The night staff were receiving physical intervention training on the day of the monitoring visit, which will resolve this issue. However, it is of concern that the issue arose and no additional action was taken to manage the risk.

Work continues to take place to improve the quality of the building and the grounds, with the removal of damaged furniture and further painting taking place. There is now a section of the back garden that staff and children use to grow vegetables. This all contributes to a homelier environment than at the full inspection.

The requirements and recommendations from the full inspection remain; they will be monitored at the next inspection or visit. One additional requirement is raised in respect of ensuring staff have the relevant physical intervention training.

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by the local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to five female young people aged between 11 and 17 with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
8: The education standard In order to meet the education standard, the registered provider must ensure— (2)(a) that staff— (vi) maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement; With specific regard to promoting homework and understanding the reasons for any absence.	12/07/2016
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, with particular regard to risk management, the registered provider must ensure— 2(a) 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;	12/07/2016
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, with particular regard to staff trained in physical intervention, the	28/06/2016

registered provider must— (2)(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;	
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, with particular regard to ensuring consistency between documentation and clarity in improvement plans, the registered provider must— (2)(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	12/07/2016
The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it (Regulation 16(3)(a)).	12/07/2016
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular, the registered person must ensure that a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child (Regulation 23(1)(2)(c)).	12/07/2016
The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience (Regulation 33(4)(b)).	12/07/2016
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person, if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires (Regulation 44(2)(a)).	12/07/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that children are able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon, with particular regard to giving feedback to children following discussions in residents meetings ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11).
- Ensure that the home requests copies of 'return' interviews and takes account of information within them when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place

to protect each child ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30).

- Ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them, with particular regard to ensuring that recruitment records show that a satisfactory DBS certificate has been seen ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1).

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

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

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