

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	27/03/2014
Inspector	David Putnam
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	06/11/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is owned by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for a maximum of six children, who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Children living in the home are able to access education through separately registered provision which is managed by the same organisation. Therapy or counselling is also available to children if this is appropriate.

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 **good progress**.

At the last full inspection in November 2013 all individual judgement areas and the overall effectiveness of this home were judged to be outstanding. No requirements or recommendations were made. Since that time leaders and managers have demonstrated a continued commitment to improving the quality of care and the outcomes for individual children.

Managers and staff work closely with placing authorities to support carefully considered admission procedures. Attention to detail leads to successful planned introductions of new children coming to live in the home. As a result, children feel part of the process and are confident that their views contribute to the decision making process. Social workers describe introductions as 'brilliant' and commend the quality of information shared by managers and staff following the placement of children.

Parents are also extremely positive about the quality of care provided in the home.

They recognise genuine progress their children make. Attendance and behaviour at school are cited as particular examples of improvement. This leads to comments such as, 'they've worked wonders'; 'I have nothing bad to say about the home' and 'I couldn't be happier. I think he's in the best place. I am so pleased'.

Close and pro-active engagement with health professionals ensures that the individual health needs of children are comprehensively met. Through the introduction of appropriate medication for diagnosed conditions children are helped to concentrate, focus and manage their own behaviour more effectively. This has significant impact upon their educational outcomes.

Through consistent attendance in appropriate education provision children make demonstrable improvements in their educational attainment over time. When appropriate, children prepare to transition from the organisation's own school to maintained provision in the wider community. Staff continue to emphasise the value of education. Through clear routines children are supported to further their learning through discussing their day, completing homework or reading to staff when they first return from school.

Effective monitoring by the Registered Manager leads to staff implementing alternative approaches with individual children. This continues to influence a reduction in the number of physical interventions or restraints. The overall pattern or trend has continued to fall since the last inspection. This has been achieved at a time when additional children have come to live in the home, taking the home to its full registration capacity.

The introduction of an innovative new scheme focuses upon the positive behaviour of children. Children are encouraged to reflect through self-evaluation, signing the 'Good as Gold' book when they feel they have done well. Children decided upon the reward structure and expectations for their behaviour. Consequently, they are rewarded with comics of their choice when their individual targets are reached, but readily accept if they do not consider they meet their own expectations.

Through access to a range of age appropriate toys children continue to grow and develop through the promotion of play. For some, this represents a new experience for them. Opportunities to socialise and play together with each other are taken. Over time this builds personal confidence and supports them to engage with groups and clubs in the wider community. Consequently, children have new experiences, develop skills and make friendships outside the home.

One recommendation is made to introduce emergency evacuation drills at times when children and staff are asleep. This will support awareness of what action to take if an emergency occurred during the night.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure there is an emergency escape plan that all staff and children are familiar with and have practiced so they know what to do in an emergency; in particular that this includes drills at night time. (NMS 10.9)

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*.