

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	27/02/2014
Inspector	Seka Graovac / Patrick Sullivan
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	07/10/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home was registered in 2005 to provide residential care and support for up to five young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties. The home is owned and operated by a private organisation that has recently registered another home in the area. One Registered Manager is in charge of both homes.

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 full inspection that took place in October 2014, the overall effectiveness of the home was judged to be adequate. All aspects that were evaluated were judged to be adequate. Those aspects included outcomes for young people, quality of care, safeguarding and leadership and management. The home provided a safe place for young people. However, a high number of areas for improvement were identified. The weaknesses in the service provision related to the written policies and records, the environment and information sent to Ofsted. This has led to nine requirements and three recommendations being made.

The purpose of this inspection was to ascertain the level of improvement and also, to make a judgement on the progress that the service has made since the last visit.

The strongest improvement has been achieved in respect of young people's education. The manager and staff have worked in effective partnership with other professionals to ensure that all young people receive education. The young people

now regularly attend their schools and colleges. They have made good progress in their learning and educational attainment. Their educational outcomes have significantly improved.

Out of the nine statutory requirements made, the home has secured compliance with seven of them. These seven requirements related to the Statement of Purpose (SOP), complaints, staff disciplinary procedure, visitors-log, environment and notifications and reports on the home's internal quality of care reviews being sent to Ofsted.

The SOP has been amended to more accurately describe the service. All stakeholders are now provided with the more comprehensive and accurate information about the home. This enables them to make better informed choices.

There have been no complaints. The awareness about what constitutes good practice in respect of the complaints and record-keeping has been raised within the home.

The staff disciplinary procedure has been amended to more clearly support robust child protection procedures and practice. The procedure makes clear to staff that not reporting suspected or observed abuse is gross misconduct.

The visitors log has been amended. It now records the names of the visitors, rather than only the name of the organisation they represent as it was done previously. This means that the home now keeps a more detailed record of the people who visit.

Ofsted has received an appropriate notification of the only significant event that happened in the home, and also the manager's report on the review of the quality of care. This has enabled Ofsted to monitor the service more effectively in between the visits.

The physical environment has been much improved. New flooring has been fitted to the kitchen, stairs, the landing on the first floor and one of the bathrooms. The broken toilet seat has been replaced. Some bedrooms have been fully refurbished. Young people now live in an environment that is better maintained and more pleasant. However, further work is recommended to bring all the areas in the home to a better standard.

Two requirements are restated in this report. They relate to the records of sanctions and the child protection procedures. The manager is able to clearly evidence some work done and a certain level of improvement achieved. However, the records of the sanctions used in the home are not always consistent with other records kept on the young people's files. One of the written procedures relating to responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse still requires to be improved in order to clearly describe acceptable practice. It still contains a confusing statement that undermines safe child protection practice when dealing with possibly abusive behaviour between young people.

Two recommendations relating to listening to young people and the quality of individual risk assessments are restated in this report. Although the manager is able to demonstrate that some work has been done to expand the opportunities for young people to express their views and to make their risk assessments more individualised, further improvement in this is recommended.

The manager was unable to demonstrate that any work has been done to bring the risk assessments of the premises up to date. The last risk assessment was carried out in 2011, but the majority of the risk assessments were signed off last time, in 2010. The related recommendation has now become a requirement.

Staff still struggle to achieve consistency of the information across different records that the home is required to keep. The impact of this is that the records do not always match when cross-referenced. An example of this is in relation to the significant event that happened in December 2013 and that was notified to Ofsted. This report has still not been finalised within the home. It has not been included in the young person's file, although this person no longer lives in this home. The incident has not been logged within the home's central record of incidents. This compromises monitoring of the incidents within the home. The other impact of the inconsistent record-keeping is that some records provide contradictory information. This is confusing. The reader is left uncertain about which record to believe.

The home has achieved better compliance with the Children's Homes Regulations across a range of regulations. However, further improvement is required in a number of aspects of the service in order to fully satisfy relevant legislation and to be able to demonstrate more consistently that the home provides good quality care.

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
16 (2001)	review and amend the home's written policies and procedures intended to safeguard children so that they clearly and consistently describe good practice (Regulation 16(1))	05/03/2014
17B (2001)	improve records of any measures of control or discipline so that all sanctions are recorded and are consistent with other records kept in the home (Regulation 17B)	31/03/2014
23 (2001)	demonstrate that the home has done everything reasonably practicable to ensure that all parts of the home are free from hazards from health and safety by implementing arrangements for carrying out and recording risk assessments on a regular	31/03/2014

	basis (Regulation 23(a))	
29 (2001)	ensure that records are kept in the home as required, including records of significant incidents. (Regulation 29(1))	07/03/2014

Recommendations

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

- demonstrate better how children and young people are being listened to (Children Act 1989, Volume 5 point 2.28)
- demonstrate better how children are helped to understand how to keep themselves safe by improving the quality of the written individual risk assessments. (NMS 4.4)

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*.