

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Caroline Oldham
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Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	13/09/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home provides care and accommodation for up to children and four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, aged between seven and 17 years and is owned by a registered charity.

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 previous inspection in September 2012 the overall quality rating for the service was judged as outstanding, with no requirements or recommendations set.

The home is fully staffed, and the team work well together. The manager and her deputy now work on some shifts, giving them a good understanding of the day-to-day issues within the home. Also, staff now have days set aside for administration, to ensure that relevant paperwork is followed through and plans are up-to-date. As issues are identified, strategies are put in place to address any shortfall, and so the home is continually making improvements and changes, which ensures that children and young people receive high quality care.

Staff work hard to promote contact between parents and their children, where this is appropriate, and have been successful in re-establishing relationships. Consequently young people who have not seen their parents for some time have been able to re-establish meetings. The staff team are keen to involve young people in all aspects of their care, and during the school holidays staff meetings also include the young people. Records show their involvement, and also their desire to become even more

involved, such as chairing and taking the minutes at the community meetings.

All children and young people are in education, with placements tailored to their individual needs. Young people make significant progress in their school attendance, and say that they now enjoy school. Staff work closely with schools, and act as good parents; helping with homework and practicing numeracy and literacy, so that children and young people learn new skills and grow in confidence.

The home remains in good decorative order, and some young people have been involved in selecting paint colours and designs for their bedrooms. Where they make suggestions, these are frequently acted upon, such as the request for a white board in the games room. Young people are proud of the home and their rooms, and enjoy the facilities.

Children and young people's health needs are high priority for the staff team. There are good systems for administering medication, with any areas of weak practice quickly identified and rectified. Where children and young people are seriously ill, appropriate action is taken to ensure that they receive the very best care. However, the necessary notifications to the appropriate authorities are not always made in a timely manner. All young people enjoy a healthy diet and have opportunities for regular exercise, such as, horse-riding, swimming, dancing and gymnastics.

Staff deal sensitively with any behavioural issues, and help young people to manage their own behaviour. They receive additional support from a child psychologist. As a result of the professional input, children and young people have made great strides in learning to express themselves appropriately, and not to react and get involved in the provocative behaviour of others. Staff treat children and young people with respect, they work with them to make clear behaviour plans, and reward them for doing well, consequently children and young people make significant progress in their behaviour.

Staff put appropriate strategies in place to keep young people safe, and all staff are aware of what to do if they are concerned about the welfare of a child. Sanctions are rare, and there have been no incidents of young people being physically restrained. Occasionally young people go missing, and link work sessions are always conducted with the young person and a member of staff. However documentation regarding the period when the young person is missing, how staff keep in contact with them, and how their subsequent return is handled, lacks detail. Although there are some documentation weaknesses, these do not detract from very safe practice overall, and young people confirm that they feel safe.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the registered person has a system in place to notify within 24 hours the persons and appropriate authorities of the occurrence of significant events in accordance with Regulation 30 (NMS 24.1)
- provide written records when a child goes missing that detail the action taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return, any reason given by the child for running away from the home, and any action taken in the light of those reasons. (NMS 5.10)

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*.