

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Pete Hylton
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Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	04/08/2011
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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 (March 2011)*.

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.

Service information

Brief description of the service

This privately operated home offers accommodation for up to four young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Progress

Since their previous inspection the service is judged to be making **good** progress.

At the last full inspection in August 2011, this home was judged to be good and two recommendations were made.

Young people are encouraged to explore issues around puberty and adolescence. Key working sessions regularly explore these issues and staff are capable and confident in addressing sensitive issues with young people. Furthermore, the care staff link closely with teachers to provide a planned and structured approach which reinforces work in the school. Therefore, the recommendation made relating to this at the last inspection has been met.

The garden has been improved since the last inspection. Garden furniture has been purchased and young people are able to express themselves on an outside chalkboard which is well used. Further developments include the provision of spaces for young people to grow vegetables. In addition to this, there are ongoing links with local horticultural organisations to further develop the outside spaces. The manager has a detailed development plan for the garden and progress is regularly reviewed and monitored. This recommendation is, therefore, met.

There have been few restraints since the last inspection. Where restraint does occur, this is handled sensitively and appropriately by staff. Young people are able to express their views and feelings. Furthermore, these views are well documented in records kept by the home. This enables the manager to have an excellent overview of events happening in the home.

Where sanctions are applied for negative behaviour, these are appropriate, fair and proportionate. Although the recording system used by the home provides space for young people to comment and record their views, these are not always used effectively, as not all comments are recorded. Therefore, a recommendation relating to this has been made.

There have been no complaints since the last inspection. Young people are able to complain and are encouraged to do so. The complaints process is readily available to young people and well displayed in the home. Young people benefit from a staff team that is responsive to their individual needs. Regular discussions with young people ensure that their views are taken into account and acted upon, where

appropriate to do so.

Equality and diversity continues to be well promoted in the home. All young people benefit from memory books which detail key events in their lives. These enable young people to develop further their sense of identity and an understanding of their backgrounds. Furthermore, staff record daily positive comments in dedicated books for the young people. These are shared and discussed in regular meetings with young people. The home ensures that young people are able to express themselves and maintain their cultural identity. For example, young people are encouraged to celebrate key events which reflect their cultural heritage.

Young people continue to make very good progress at the home. All young people are engaged in appropriate educational activity. Staff support young people to regularly attend their placements and regularly review their progress. Education and positive outcomes are keenly promoted in the home. Young people benefit from a staff team that encourages them to reach their potential. Young people's achievements are well documented and celebrated in the home. Furthermore, staff produce monthly newsletters for young people to celebrate their progress. These reports are also shared with social workers and, where applicable, parents.

The manager is passionate about developing further the service that is given to young people. The home's development plan identifies key areas for the home to improve. Furthermore, the manager is developing further monitoring practices, in addition to those required under regulation, which the senior team will complete. This means that the home has a culture of continual improvement. Communication between the staff team has improved due to a more structured and planned handover system. This means that all relevant information is shared appropriately and this handover is recorded to ensure all relevant matters have been passed on. This benefits the young people as they receive continuous and well-planned care. The manager has also secured access to an external assessment tool which will support the staff in further identifying and meeting the needs of young people. The quality of care at the home remains a key strength.

Young people have positive views about the care they receive. A young person commented that, 'the staff really help me.' Relationships between staff and young people are very positive. Young people benefit from an environment which is well maintained and decorated. The manager commented that she aims to provide, 'a normal family atmosphere in the home.'

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 where sanctions, disciplinary measures or restraint are used, children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records kept by the home.

(NMS 3.18)