

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC063997
Inspection date	27/02/2014
Inspector	Philip Cass
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	07/08/2013
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2014

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

This privately owned children's home provides accommodation for three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The provider organisation operates nationally, providing a range of care services for children and young people.

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 **inadequate progress**.

At the last inspection in August 2013 the overall effectiveness rating for the home was judged to be good.

At the last inspection in August 2013 the overall effectiveness rating for the home was judged to be good.

Some young people's experience in the home continues to be very positive. They attend school regularly and are confident of educational success. They describe staff as 'really great', and feel that the home does all it can to meet their needs. However, other young people have a significantly reduced likelihood of achieving positive outcomes. This is because their standard of behaviour and interaction with staff has deteriorated. Also, in contrast to the previous inspection, they do not attend school or college.

One recommendation was made at the previous inspection. This has been addressed and the home's supervision records is now well maintained. As a result the home is

better able to demonstrate that performance management systems are effective. Because the manager is setting higher expectations of staff conduct and performance, she demonstrates the ability to drive improvement in the home. However, a decline in the quality of staff training has the capacity to undermine these efforts.

At the time of the previous inspection, all staff were provided with a range of training that equipped them to meet the particular needs of young people placed in the home. However, only half of the staff team are currently trained to work with children who have Autistic Spectrum Disorders, and none receive specific training in Asperger's Syndrome. No staff are provided with guidance and training in gang awareness, drug and alcohol misuse, or Attachment Disorder. This limits their ability to understand and respond to the complex needs of young people placed at the home. Staff do have access to a limited programme of essential training in safeguarding, restraint and first aid, they are often expected to travel considerable distances to attend which is a barrier to the professional development of many of them..

There is some good practice in relation to admissions to the home. For example, where possible, the Registered Manager visits young people prior to placement so that young people understand what they can expect before they move in. Despite this, some young people are placed at the home without a realistic prospect of achieving good outcomes. For example one young person recently placed at the home does not have any realistic plans to achieve educational success. In some cases young people also express great disappointment in their placement because the geographical location had not been explained to them. Consequently, they refuse to engage in any aspect of their programme of care.

The safety of young people is promoted because the Registered Manager has a very good understanding of safeguarding policy and procedure. She also has very effective working relationships with specialist safeguarding agencies. This means that allegations against staff are handled effectively. Because the manager promotes an open and transparent culture, the risk of abuse or exploitation is minimised. The Local Authority Designated Officer for safeguarding states that he is 'very satisfied' with child protection systems in the home. The effectiveness of safeguarding training is demonstrated by the fact that staff also have a good knowledge of safeguarding practice.

Since the last inspection the home has worked closely with local youth justice agencies to develop effective restorative justice approaches. This supports young people to take responsibility for their actions in a positive manner. It also means that they have a significantly reduced risk of criminalisation during their time at the home. Equality and Diversity has also been a focus of the home. By providing a specific cultural events notice board, the home is able to ensure that young people benefit from regularly updated information about other cultures. This supports young people to celebrate diversity.

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
18 (2001)	promote the educational achievement of children accommodated in the children's home (Regulation 18(1))	18/04/2014
27 (2001)	ensure that all staff receive appropriate training. (Regulation 27 (4)(a))	18/04/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the children's home only provides admission to children whose assessed needs they can reasonably expect to meet (NMS 11.2)

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*.