

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	22/01/2014
Inspector	Jacqueline Malcolm
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	30/05/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This is one of a number of children's homes operated by a private company. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

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 inspection in May 2013, the overall effectiveness of the home was judged to be outstanding. Good progress has been made since that time, which supports continued improvement in the quality of care and outcomes for young people.

Since the last inspection, a young person has successfully moved on and a new placement has been made. Due to the homes good routines, clear structures and boundaries, young people quickly settle in. As a consequence, young people find stability and invest in their future plans because they understand the homes expectations. This is particularly noted in young people's excellent engagement and progress with their individual education packages. For example, some young people have completed specific exams early, successfully completed work placements and secured a place at college. Young people's high aspirations are highly nurtured by staff in partnership with teaching staff. This enhances young people's self-esteem and confidence in their abilities to achieve and reach their full potential.

Young people continue to benefit from high quality care delivered by a competent and child-focussed staff team. Staff have an exceptionally good understand of young

people's needs, which promotes their care and welfare. All of the young people and professionals make positive comments about the home and the staff team. Young people say that they get on with staff and each other. This promotes a harmonious and comfortable home-life. Young people say that they feel safe and they know that staff care about them and want them to succeed. A professional said that the home is 'welcoming', the staff are 'friendly' and 'the smell of home cooking is unusual but brilliant in a children's home'. They said, 'if I had not already known I was visiting a children's home, the experience was like walking into any other warm and friendly household'. Young people's wishes and feelings are listened to and respected. Staff and independent advocates support young people to ensure that their views are heard and shared with the relevant professionals. This values young people and helps them to shape their future decisions and plans. It also keeps young people at the centre of child care practices.

Young people continue to be enabled to develop appropriate independence skills in the home and community. This enables them to competently care for themselves, reduce dependency on staff over time and improve their social skills.

Young people who have been missing on a small number of occasions are protected by coherent missing from care protocol and procedures that staff follow in practice. This ensures young people's safe return. Effective and meaningful partnerships between the home, police and other safeguarding professionals promote young people's safety and welfare. Staff are good at recognising young people's vulnerabilities and their potential to engage in risky behaviours are effectively risk managed. However, in one instance, a risk assessment has not been promptly updated, so it does not show how the home intends to minimise a presenting risk. This shortfall does not impact negatively on the safety and welfare of young people and the Registered Manager has positively undertaken to remedy the issue. This demonstrates their commitment to take positive action to improve practice and move forward.

Young people continue to benefit from effective leadership and management in the home. The Registered Manager and deputy are well organised and their proactive support to the team drives improvement in the home. A strong commitment to staff development underpins a motivated and knowledgeable staff team who want the best for young people. Staff engage in refresher training and those who are studying towards a recognised child-care qualification are well on target to successfully complete the course. This positive investment in the workforce ensures that high quality standards and outcomes are maintained. This enables young people to continue to thrive, which significantly improves their life chances from their starting points.

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 welfare of children living in the home is actively promoted. This specifically relates to promptly updating children's risk assessments with any changes to ensure children's continued protection (NMS 4.2)

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*.