

Children's homes – Monitoring visit

Inspection date	10/10/2016
Unique reference number	SC066010
Type of inspection	Monitoring
Inspector	Simon Morley

This monitoring visit

The registered provider has taken appropriate action to meet the requirements of the compliance notice served after the last inspection, which took place on 1 September 2016.

Leaders have taken steps to improve practice and ensure that young people are sufficiently safeguarded. In particular, practice with regards to missing-from-home incidents and managing risks is better. All young people now have individual missing-from-home plans in place for staff to refer to. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities when a young person is missing or absent from the home. These include consideration of the issues relating to particular risks to young people, for example substance misuse, whether their siblings are missing at the same time, previous patterns of missing from home and locations of known friends and acquaintances.

The improvements in assessing risk and implementing action plans help to ensure that young people are better protected. Staff practice is more effective and consistent and takes account of relevant risks, which helps to keep young people safe.

Leaders have appropriately challenged partner agencies to ensure that young people receive an independent return-home interview after a missing-from-home incident. Issues remain in respect of the local authority that is reluctant to share this information, and this is being further challenged. Young people are able to make their views known. They can access someone independent of the home, if they wish, to share any concerns they might have that directly relate to the home.

Management oversight of incidents and record-keeping continues to improve. Any issues concerning staff practice are taken up in supervision and general discussion in team meetings. Staff have received further training on safeguarding matters, including radicalisation and safeguarding for leaders. This is building a better and stronger staff team that is more competent in fulfilling its duties to protect young people. The recently appointed service manager is implementing a more effective system for evaluating young people's experiences, progress and the quality of care. There is a wide-ranging action plan in place to support a process of continuous improvement.

The quality of the independent visitor's scrutiny of the home is under review. The requirement for visits and reports to be rigorous is carried forward. The next six-monthly review of the home by the manager is due. The requirement that this includes the views of young people, their parents, placing authorities and staff is also carried forward. There remains one recommendation from the last inspection: to remove the discrepancy in the statement of purpose about the home being able to support young people who display sexually harmful behaviours. The manager agreed to remove this statement but has not yet done so.

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered person(s) meet(s) the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The independent person must produce a report about a visit ('the independent person's report'). The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to HMCI (Regulation 44(4) & (7)(a)). In particular, the report must include rigorous assessment based on robust evidence of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care.	30/11/2016
The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (5))	31/10/2016

Recommendations

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

- The information set out in the statement of purpose is an essential part of the process of agreement, between the registered person and placing authority, that a placement in that home is the right one for that child, and that the home will be able to respond effectively to the child's assessed needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.6) In particular, that aspect of the statement that indicates that the home is suitable for children who display harmful sexual behaviours should be reviewed.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

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