

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Angela Whiteley
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Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	17/04/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This private home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is also registered to provide education.

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 **satisfactory progress**.

At the last full inspection in April 2013, the overall effectiveness was judged as good. The Registered Manager has addressed the three recommendations made at the last inspection.

A number of staff changes have taken place since the last inspection to establish an experienced female staff team who are able to meet the current and emerging needs of the young people in placement. Clear guidance is provided within the home's Statement of Purpose on how young people will maintain relationships with members of the opposite gender. The management arrangements have been strengthened by the appointment of a new, experienced Registered Manager who maintains effective leadership of the home.

The home has made progress in other areas, since the last inspection which has a positive impact on young people. For example, thorough checking and recording of gaps in employment history provides a more robust recruitment process. This ensures young people continue to enjoy good quality care provided by staff that are

thoroughly vetted. A review of the children's guide has taken place. However, a further review is required to ensure young people have all the relevant contact information they require in one place.

Some young people are new in placement. They benefit from carefully planned admissions that enable them to settle quickly. They make progress relative to the time they have lived there, particularly in managing their behaviours and engaging more productively with psychological interventions. Placements are subject to frequent review, in particular emergency placements to ensure young people's needs can continue to be met by the home.

The progress of some young people at this home is compromised by their wish to make their own decisions about key areas of their lives. They continue to display the same behaviours that they were presenting prior to their admission. They are not willing to accept that their behaviours need to change or that their risk taking behaviour places them and others at significant risk of harm, particularly when they continue to go missing from the home. Staff take appropriate action to any incidents and are committed to helping young people achieve stability.

Staff and other professionals provide sufficient health information and advice about the effects and legality of smoking, alcohol and drug use. However, some young people choose not to take this advice, which puts them at risk of harm especially when they go missing from the home.

Staff recognise particular vulnerabilities relating to the diverse needs of young people and take appropriate action to address them. Missing from home incidents are dealt with promptly. The home has strengthened its links with external agencies. They have developed proactive relationships with the police, specialist support teams and other professionals who offer effective support to the staff and to young people who are involved in risk taking behaviours. Staff are not deterred when young people place themselves at risk of harm and take appropriate action to ensure their safety and welfare. They go the extra mile in trying to locate young people, ensuring they return home safely and as soon as possible. Staff are proactive in communicating with placing authorities to highlight the safeguarding concerns. They share information and strategies for working with young people that help to improve their safety and welfare.

Young people benefit from a strong commitment to staff training and development within the home. Staff attend specialist training in child sexual exploitation and self-harming behaviours. This improves the skills, knowledge and understanding of staff that are up-to-date with their practice and are able to promote and protect young people's safety and welfare.

The staff team are committed and motivated and fully understand their role. Together with the Registered Manager, they deliver a strong, child-focused service in a nurturing environment where young people are supported to achieve their potential. The Registered Manager takes an organised and proactive approach to managing the home. This ensures young people are protected through a number of

measures, including risk assessments, regular monitoring and frequent communication with a range of statutory and other agencies. Any area of weakness identified is dealt with promptly by the Registered Manager, which ensures the standards within the home continue to improve.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure children's health is promoted in accordance with their placement plan and staff are clear about what responsibilities and decisions are delegated to them. In particular, this relates to young people smoking (NMS 6.5)
- review the Children's Guide to include the contact details of each child's Independent Reviewing Officer, the Children's Rights Director and how they secure access to an independent advocate. (NMS 13.5)

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*.