

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	30/10/2012
Inspector	Chris Scully
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	25/04/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home provides care and accommodation for up to four young people aged 10 to 17 years, who may experience 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**.

The home's last full inspection was in April 2012. The overall effectiveness was judged to be adequate. Following the inspection, one statutory requirement and six recommendations were raised. These related to: the restraint record; maintenance of the home; information not recorded clearly; behaviour management plans; personal education plans; and the home's Statement of Purpose and young people's guide.

Young people and placing authorities are now more aware of the home's aims and objectives as its Statement of Purpose has been updated and shared with them. The young people's guide now shows the correct contact details for Ofsted, which means they are now able to contact Ofsted should they have any concerns or worries. These amendments have improved upon the organisation of the home and promoted transparency between them, placing authorities, young people and their parents and carers.

Information about young people is now recorded in a more meaningful manner. Records of key worker sessions outline the discussions that have taken place and young people are encouraged to sign them. Young people have a greater say in what is recorded about them and have the opportunity to say if they agree with it or not.

Consequently, young people feel more valued and are more involved in the decision making processes. Pocket money and incentive records clearly demonstrate when monies have been given to young people. However, young people's clothing allowances do not always tally up correctly. While this discrepancy falls in favour of young people, it does not provide an accurate audit trail.

The Registered Manager and staff are now aware of each young person's educational needs. They are in the process of securing school placements and personal education plans for all young people who are new to the home. The Registered Manager is regularly in contact with schools and other education support agencies to support young people's engagement with their education.

Young people now live in a well maintained, homely environment. This is because positive steps have been taken to address maintenance issues. New bedroom furniture has been purchased and young people's bedrooms clearly reflect their personal style and interests. Young people's safety has been enhanced as all rusty and peeling paint has been treated and repainted. Young people's wishes and feeling are actively sought by the home. For example, a young person recently moved their bedroom to the ground floor. This was because they felt it would enable them to get up each day and go to school as they would not be disturbed by others. The lounge and games room are now combined. However, this arrangement does not lend itself to a homely, relaxing area, due to a number of large pieces of office style furniture in the room. The Registered Manager is aware of this and is taking steps to address this.

Staff have attended numerous training courses since the last inspection, including person-centred care, behaviour management and restraint. They are due to attend de-escalation training. Staff say this has been a valuable exercise for them and has enabled them and the Registered Manager to consider the behaviour management strategies in place for each young person. Consequently, behaviour management strategies are now personalised to each young person's needs. Young people are involved in setting goals for their behaviour management plan. They have ownership of the plan and are able to comment upon how effective they feel it is. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of sanctions imposed and has seen a rise in the number of rewards and incentives provided to young people. The Registered Manager has improved upon the recording of any restraints: any injuries to staff or young people are now recorded. There have been no physical interventions since the last inspection.

The home has improved upon the safety and well-being of young people and reduced the incidents of young people being missing. This is because they are actively working with police and social workers to help keep young people safe, including attending meetings around potential child sexual exploitation. The revised missing from care protocol means staff actively search for young people and report to police any addresses that may be causing them concern. As a consequence, police have issued harbouring notices, resulting in young people no longer being able to stay at those addresses. Staff have also collected young people each night to assist them in coming home safely.

The home is effectively monitored by its Registered Person and Registered Manager. Their monitoring enables the home to look at new ways of working. For example, introducing manager record forms to record conversations with staff and others and to provide a clearer audit trail.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- enhance the systems for monitoring the quality and accuracy of record keeping, in particular records of young people's clothing allowances (NMS 22.1)
- ensure the home provides a comfortable and homely environment, in particular in the new lounge. (NMS 10. 3)

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)*.