

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	25/02/2013
Inspector	Elizabeth Barrett
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Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	03/10/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is operated by a private provider and is registered to provide care and support to six children of the same sex with emotional behavioural difficulties and learning 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 **satisfactory progress**.

At the last inspection in October 2012 the overall quality rating of the service was judged as good, with one requirement and three recommendations made to improve the provision. The home has met the requirement and recommendations set and has made satisfactory progress at this inspection.

Most young people continue to make good individual progress living in this home. For example, in attending education and work experience placements; learning practical life-skills, and engaging in activities in the local community. For some young people individual therapy sessions remain a positive aspect of support because they make good progress in understanding their presenting behaviours. They also develop positive self-esteem and social skills in preparation for adulthood. Feedback from one social worker includes, 'This service is creative in meeting the young person's needs. I am very satisfied with the home's ability to fulfil the young person's care plan.'

All young people now have suitable care and pathway plans in place. Regular multi-disciplinary placement meetings robustly review young people's individual placement

objectives, and consider specific areas of need such as young people's behaviour management. As a result, revised strategies and approaches are considered which provide guidance for staff on how to respond to individual episodes of challenging behaviour. In addition, monthly staff meetings provide staff with opportunities to reflect on their own practice to ensure young people's care and support needs are consistently met.

Improvements have been made to the monitoring of records in the home. The Registered Manager has provided staff with clear guidance on how to complete records accurately. Reference sheets are now attached to central logbooks which provide information on details to be recorded. The manager routinely monitors records through internal quality assurance checks and shortfalls are identified and addressed. The provider has revised the staff personnel checklist to include the telephone verification of all references prior to workers commencing employment in the home. The robustness of the system could not be tested as there have been no staff recruited to this service since the last inspection.

While most young people make positive progress in developing appropriate coping strategies, there are some incidents of individual risk-taking behaviour such as smoking in bedrooms and setting fire to an item of clothing. Individual risk assessments for young people address current risks and identify measures to help reduce the risks. For example, introducing waking night staff, room safety checks and ensuring all staff have immediate access to a phone for use in the event of a fire. The Registered Manager has informed the placing authority regarding the above risk taking behaviour and meetings are organised to discuss contingency arrangements. As a result, robust fire safety measures and practices are in place, and staffing levels ensure young people are effectively supervised and their welfare safeguarded.

Following a recent local authority fire safety audit, the Registered Manager is currently addressing all areas identified for action as a result of this visit. Although, the fire risk assessment had not been updated to include the recent incident of fire setting, young people were considered safe as suitable actions had been taken to reduce the risk of fire.

In addition, the home has not sufficiently reviewed the impact that individual behaviour may have on others in the home, to ensure the on-going compatibility of young people in line with the Statement of Purpose. Although this has not impacted upon the safety and welfare of young people, a recommendation has been made to address this shortfall as potentially this could be of future concern.

There is a reduction in complaints made by young people because they benefit from positive relationships with staff, and are supported to communicate any issues or concerns. Good quality key working sessions and one to one discussions ensure young people are regularly consulted about matters that are important to them. There is a revised development plan for the home that is informed through consultation with young people, staff, and stakeholders. Areas identified for improvement include promoting young people's participation and personal

development in training, such as food hygiene, first aid, and fire awareness. The home demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement and achieving positive outcomes for young people.

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
32 (2001)	ensure after consultation with the fire and rescue authority adequate precautions against the risk of fire are taken, including the review of the homes fire risk assessment and responding to advice given by the fire authority, in a timely manner (Regulation 32 (1)(a))	08/03/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure risk assessments are carried out, to identify any potential sources of harm to the children are recorded in writing and regularly reviewed, particularly in relation to impact risk assessments following fire safety audits, and incidents of fire setting in the home (NMS 10.8)

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*.