

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC356963
Inspection date	15/11/2011
Inspector	Michael McCleave
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	04/05/2011
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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)*.

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.

Service information

Brief description of the service

This is a local authority-run children's home. It is a detached single storey building situated in a residential area. Staff provide care for young people who are vulnerable and for different reasons unable to live with their families. The home accommodates up to six young people aged from 10 to 17-years-old.

Young people have individual bedrooms with en-suite shower rooms. The home has a lounge, kitchen with dining area, quiet or computer room, bathroom and a laundry. The garden is enclosed and has a lawn and patio area. The home is situated within easy access to the local community, public transport and leisure facilities.

Progress

Since their previous inspection the service is judged to be making **satisfactory** progress.

This home is currently judged as good. However, only satisfactory progress has been made in respect of the recommendation made at the last inspection for the monitoring of key records. Some signatures were missing from the restraint record, and evidence to indicate monthly records checks by the manager only shows these checks up to May this year. The manager has recently returned to the home following an absence on a secondment for two years and has initiated a strategy to improve the management of the administrative systems for records. There is a positive commitment at the home to address the administrative shortfalls. This does not impact directly on the good quality of care provided to the young people.

The monthly inspections carried out by a representative for the registered provider under the Children's Homes Regulations 2001 (Regulation 33) identified supervision of staff as an area requiring development. The manager has addressed this matter and a more robust schedule is now in place to ensure that all staff receive regular formal supervision. This promotes good practice and provides staff with support to carry out their duties more effectively on behalf of the young people.

This home positively promotes the value of education. Young people are encouraged and supported to attend school and until recently, the home achieved full school attendance. This has declined with a new intake of young people to the home. Some are refusing to attend school and staff are working positively to resolve this situation. The manager has initiated contact with senior managers to review this situation as a matter of urgency. Educational outcomes for the current group of young people are therefore not being achieved.

The building is well maintained and the young people enjoy single bedrooms with modern en-suite facilities.

The young people are cared for by an adequate number of staff who strive to provide good quality care. However, due to some staff shortages, there is at times, an inconsistency in relationships with young people when temporary casual staff are used. Staff development through training remains a key feature at the home. The manager is currently organising training for all staff in attachment theory and relationships. This is intended to enhance their skills in working with young people who have difficulty engaging with adults. This is good practice. Despite the current difficulties relating young people not engaging in their education, staff nevertheless, remain positive in their commitment to provide good quality care. This home continues to provide the young people with a safe caring environment.

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 are supported to attend school, college or alternative provision regularly. (NMS 8.3)