

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Monica Hargreaves
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Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	26/04/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This privately run children's home provides care and accommodation for up to three young people with emotional and/or 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 **satisfactory progress**.

At the last inspection, in April 2012, the overall effectiveness of the home was judged to be good. Since that inspection, the home has made satisfactory progress overall.

Almost all of the recommendations that were made at the last inspection are met. Staff have maintained the quality of care for young people, ensuring that young people have made steady progress in many areas of their lives. Those young people who contributed to the inspection reported that staff keep them safe and that they feel that staff look after them well.

At the last inspection, the manager was asked to ensure that young people understand and contribute to their plans. This has been achieved. Staff support young people to be fully involved in developing their individual placement plans. This ensures that young people understand their plans and that their views are incorporated into them. Plans are produced in a format this is relevant to young people to make them more accessible to them. Young people's views are incorporated into them. Placement plans are regularly monitored to ensure that they reflect the progress young people make and highlight their continuing needs.

A recommendation about preparation for independence and pathway planning was made at the previous inspection. This is also met. Young people are encouraged to develop personal and independence skills to prepare them for later life. No young person living at the home at the time of this visit was of an age to need a pathway plan. However, staff understand the importance of ensuring that such plans are put in place for young people in order so that they are supported when they leave care.

The recommendation that was made about aspects of staff training is also met. All staff have had training in safeguarding and in the safe administration of medication. This training is regularly refreshed to maintain the knowledge and skills of staff. The organisation has also made additional training available to staff in order for them to understand and meet the specific needs of individual young people they look after. This training supports staff in their work.

A recommendation regarding the maintenance of the home has also been acted on. At this visit, it was noted that carpets had been replaced and that areas of the home had been redecorated. However, young people had caused significant damage to some parts of the home during the evening before the inspection. This was being repaired on the day of the visit to ensure that the home is brought back up to a good standard of repair and decoration.

One recommendation is not fully met and is carried forward. This relates to the need to ensure that all young people attend school or college regularly in order to enable them to achieve in education. Staff recognise the value of education and they actively encourage young people's attendance. They work with placing authorities and education providers to ensure that each young person has an education provision that is appropriate to their needs. Staff make sure that they have an up-to-date copy of each young person's personal education plan and they attend meetings at schools about young people's progress. Staff also provide practical support to young people to enable them to attend. Although all young people do manage to attend school, attendance levels for some young people are not good. This impacts on their ability to achieve and can lead to them having less opportunities in later life.

When they are admitted to the home, some young people have a history of putting themselves at risk by frequently going missing from home or care. Staff have been successful in helping young people to significantly reduce the likelihood of this happening, which has contributed to their safety and well-being.

Care staff work hard to support young people in learning to manage conflict in their lives in ways that are socially acceptable. They develop positive relationships with young people which has helped some young people learn to manage difficulties appropriately and to behave well. However, the efforts of staff have not been as successful with other young people whose behaviour has continued to be challenging. Staff are trained in appropriate behaviour management techniques, including the use of physical restraint. Staff develop individual behaviour support plans with young people to ensure that there is consistency in the way they are cared for and supported. Physical intervention is only ever used as a last resort when

it is necessary to protect young people and staff. Records show that there have been few incidents of physical intervention overall since the last inspection, but that for some young people these have increased. Staff are continuing to work to engage positively with young people to help them to learn to behave appropriately.

One recommendation has been made as a result of this inspection. This is carried forward from the last inspection and relates to young people's attendance at school or college.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that young people attend school, college or alternative provision regularly. (NMS 8.3)

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*.