

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC357133
Inspection date	30/01/2012
Inspector	Valerie Shephard
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	16/06/2011
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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.

This interim inspection has focused on the progress made by the home since the previous full inspection when the overall effectiveness was judged to be satisfactory. The home has made satisfactory progress in a number of areas which maintains the quality of care and outcomes for young people.

The registered person has dealt with all but one of the five recommendations made at the previous inspection. The recommendations relate to young people's education, consultation with young people, staffing numbers and training, and the home's development plan.

All young people are in full-time education or attending college, and staff are working more productively with external agencies to facilitate this improvement. When young people have been out of school, staff have worked cooperatively with school, social workers and other agencies to ensure a swift return. A parent commented that 'staff fully support school and education and work with school staff' for the benefit of her child. The staff team assist young people to keep appointments with health professionals such as the child and adolescent mental health service. They also have

access to a therapist for advice on strategies to help young people with their emotional and behavioural difficulties. As a result, young people are achieving positive outcomes in relation to their attendance at school and improvements in their behaviour and emotional development.

There is evidence of better communication between staff and young people to ensure that their views, wishes and feelings are acted upon. Feedback to young people is now given more promptly, and handover meetings ensure that information is passed between staff members efficiently. One young person commented that 'I can trust staff and tell them things and they will listen to me.'

There are now sufficient staff to meet the needs of the young people who are resident in the home. Following the departure of the previous manager, the home has an acting manager. This individual is an established staff member, which offers continuity to the young people in the home. However, there has been a breach of regulation as Ofsted were not informed that there was a change of manager.

The recommendation regarding staff training has not been addressed and a requirement has been made in this report. Most of the staff team hold the National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. The remaining staff members are working towards the Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma at level 3. Training in core areas such as child protection and use of physical restraint are high on the agenda within the home. However, other training, for example first aid, medicine administration and food hygiene, is not so readily available. This is not in accordance with the home's Statement of Purpose and means that some staff are caring for young people without the necessary skills in these areas.

Young people receive good quality and consistent care from staff members and overall are achieving good outcomes. There has been a reduction in the number of incidents of physical restraint and young people missing from home. There have been no reports of bullying. Staff commented that young people are generally calmer. One young person reported that 'staff are helping me to learn how to control my temper better.' This young person has received a good report from school in relation to his attendance, punctuality and behaviour. Opportunities are available for young people to take part in a range of activities. There is evidence of involvement in sports such as football, basketball, running and horse riding.

Independence plans are in place for all young people in the home, with opportunities for younger residents also to learn independence skills. An example of this is in relation to one young person who has a budget each week to purchase food for his evening meal, and to then prepare and cook the food with assistance from staff.

A development plan is available which focuses on the recommendations made at the previous inspection, and particularly highlights improvements to the home. Internal redecoration of the home has enhanced the living environment, which looks pleasant and feels homely. Young people have chosen colour schemes for their bedrooms and assisted with the decoration. This involvement by young people has helped them to

gain a sense of pride in, and ownership of, their home. Future plans to rearrange the downstairs living area will improve the space available for young people to engage in different activities. There are also plans to replace garden furniture to enable young people to enjoy the outdoor space in the summer.

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
7 (2001)	ensure that an individual is appointed to manage the children's home (Regulation 7(1)(a))	30/04/2012
27 (2001)	ensure all persons employed receive appropriate training (Regulation 27(4)(a))	30/03/2012
38 (2001)	give notice in writing to the HMCI as soon as it is practicable to do so if a person ceases to carry on or manage the home. (Regulation 38(b))	30/03/2012

Recommendations

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

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)*.