

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	09/02/2012
Inspector	Michelle Bacon
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	27/09/2011
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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 service is a private children's home which provides care and accommodation for up to four young people of either gender, aged 10 to 17 years of age. A registered school is also included on site.

Progress

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

At the last full inspection that was carried out in September 2011, the overall effectiveness of the home was judged as satisfactory. The home has made progress on the previous requirements and recommendations which demonstrates some capacity to improve. Young people are provided with food that is properly prepared, wholesome and nutritious. This ensures young people receive a healthy and balanced diet and have an understanding of what constitutes healthy eating. A second requirement to ensure young people are registered with a general practitioner has also been addressed. Staff recruitment files are now fully compliant with the regulations and staff are receiving regular supervision which enables them to be fully supported in their work.

The home has revised the behaviour management policy; however the home has experienced problems of disruption recently and high levels of damage have occurred. This means the measures implemented have not been successful and this has had a negative impact on outcomes for young people. Additionally, the staff have had to lock off areas of the home such as the kitchen to manage behaviour, which is not a positive intervention. Furthermore, this intervention has not been risk assessed to estimate the level of risk to the health and safety of young people and staff. The manager has reviewed the home's use of sanctions to ensure financial penalties are only imposed where damage has occurred. He also monitors the use of sanctions but the young people often refuse to sign these, so it is not clear how effective they are as a consequence. Regular team meetings and supervision ensure staff are supported to manage their feelings arising from dealing with incidences of challenging behaviour.

The staff are trained in the use of restraint; however the recording of restraints is not robust as the records do not clearly demonstrate why this intervention was necessary or give details of the behaviour leading up to a restraint. Furthermore the restraint log only records limited information as the staff then record more detail on an incident sheet and a physical intervention sheet. Subsequently the information recorded in these documents varies in detail and does not provide a clear audit trail.

Young people know how to make a complaint; however they expressed their

dissatisfaction with the complaints' process at this inspection. Records demonstrate complaints are not always clearly and robustly investigated, particularly where young people have raised concerns after a restraint. Additionally where young people have not been satisfied with the outcome of their complaint they have not been given the opportunity to take this to the next stage. Complaints about staff have not been appropriately reported to the relevant authorities to ensure the safety and welfare of young people is being protected.

The incidents of young people going missing from the home remains problematic. Where this has occurred, the records clearly demonstrate young people are given the opportunity to discuss the reasons why they were missing and any action taken in light of those reasons. This safeguards the welfare of young people. There is a programme of repair and redecoration underway to improve the appearance of the home.

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
24 (2001)	ensure a written record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of the investigation (Regulation 24(5))	28/02/2012
24 (2001)	ensure that children accommodated in the home are enabled to make a complaint or representation, in particular where they are not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint they are enabled to take their complaint further (Regulation 24(6)(a))	28/02/2012
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, discipline or restraint a written record is made of details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure. (Regulation 17B(3)(b))	28/02/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure the registered person has a system in place to notify within 24 hours the persons and appropriate authorities of the occurrence of significant events in accordance with Regulation 30 (NMS 24.1)
- ensure the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well

maintained and decorated (NMS 10.3)

- ensure risk assessments of the home are carried out, to identify any potential sources of harm to the children and these are recorded in writing and regularly reviewed (NMS10.8)
- ensure monitoring identifies patterns and trends and takes immediate action to address any issues raised by this monitoring (NMS 21.2)
- ensure where any sanction, disciplinary measure or restraint are used, children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records kept by the home (NMS 3.18)
- ensure there is a system in place to monitor the quality and adequacy of record-keeping and take action when needed. (NMS 22.1)