

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	22/03/2012
Inspector	Angus Mackay
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	25/07/2011
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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 privately run home is registered to accommodate and care for no more than three young people. The home is one of a group of homes, managed by a company which also provides a day school for some of the young people. The home provides medium- to long-term residential care to young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Emergency placements can be facilitated dependant on the stability and mix of the young people in residence at the time. Young people are encouraged to maintain education at their school or college but may attend the company school. The home provides young people access to a psychotherapist. The psychotherapist also provides advice to the staff team.

Progress

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

The inspection judgement was good at the last full inspection on 25 July 2011, with three recommendations being set. The home has successfully addressed one of the recommendations. Young people continue to enjoy living in the home and receive good care from an enthusiastic staff team. The manager of the home has moved within the company and temporary management arrangements are in place to maintain the service to young people.

Young people commented at the last inspection on fire safety procedures, raising their concern that there was only one escape point. Young people and staff now have use of a second escape point if the first is blocked. Staff have created a grab bag, containing essential information on the young people, to ensure continuity of care following an emergency evacuation of the home. The company has implemented additional training in fire procedures, for fire officers, which the manager intends to cascade throughout the home. The manager will support this with staff quizzes, to improve staff awareness of fire hazards and safety procedures for young people. All young people have completed fire induction training and taken part in fire drills but some new staff have not taken part in a fire drill. To ensure staff and young people's safety is improved, the recommendation is repeated.

Young people view quarterly management reviews of their performance, including graphical displays of physical interventions, incidents within the home and any periods where they have been missing from the home. Young people say this helps them to understand their behaviour and helps them to target improvements. Most sanctions used to address extreme behaviours are appropriate and include restorative actions and discussion. On some occasions, staff have used financial sanctions to excess. Comments from young people indicate that these sanctions are ineffective. The manager reviews these sanctions regularly and must ensure that

they remain fair and reasonable.

The deputy manager has engaged the young people in a comprehensive refurbishment of the home. Young people say that they were fully involved and like the changes of which they were part. The downstairs rooms are bright, elegantly decorated and comfortably furnished. The deputy manager says that she changed colours in rooms to reflect young people's choices and to provide a more therapeutic environment. All rooms are bright and communal spaces have pictures of young people and staff engaged in activities or just having fun. The colours chosen are generally more muted than before to support the calm environment staff are seeking to create.

The deputy manager has modified the staff rota to improve the service to young people and enhance staff conditions. The rota ensures that staff are in the home when young people are there and is flexible to cover sickness or absence from school. Young people benefit from the manager providing staff with better handover periods, time to prepare food, plan activities and welcome them back from school. In addition, rotas are now available in advance to enhance staff planning and provide young people with continuity of care. The Registered Manager post is vacant and initial registration has commenced for a new manager. The temporary management arrangement has continued to provide young people with good care but the company must complete the registration process to ensure they maintain appropriate standards.

Staff enjoy good relationships with schools the young people attend which aids young people's attainment and engagement in education. Young people say that staff support them in school and assist them in planning for their future. Young people progress onto self-help programmes and can earn unsupervised time out of the home as part of this. Young people work with staff to address their own personal needs and build an understanding of other cultures and religions. Young people engage with external visitors who monitor the conduct of the home. These visits help to enhance the standards of care and provide an additional safeguard for young people but the managers have not regularly supplied these reports to Her Majesty's Chief Inspector.

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 a Registered Manager is appointed (Regulation 7 (1))	31/05/2012
33	ensure that visits in accordance with this regulation occur at	30/03/2012

(2001)	least once a month and that a written report on the conduct of the home is sent to HMCI (Regulation 33(1-5))	
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Recommendations

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

- ensure that sanctions are regularly reviewed to maintain fairness and reasonableness in their application (NMS 3.8)
- ensure that all staff have taken part in an emergency evacuation of the home. (NMS 10.9)