

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	29/02/2012
Inspector	Deirdra Keating
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	18/08/2011
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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 children's home is owned by a large private organisation and provides long term placements on behalf of local authorities. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people of either gender between the ages of 10 and 17 years. The home offers care and accommodation for young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Progress

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

This service has an overall judgement of satisfactory and following this inspection is judged to be making good progress. The home has fully addressed the requirements and a large majority of recommendations raised at the last inspection. The quality of care has been improved and young people are benefitting from a calm and settled environment. This follows an extended period of disruption at the service resulting in a previous inspection in which there many shortfalls were identified.

There has been a complete change in the young people placed at the service. Staff have considered new placements very carefully to ensure the service can fully meet the needs of future placements. The service has reflected on the past year and the challenges that young people presented. This has resulted in a focus on younger children being placed and this is currently working well.

The requirements raised at the last inspection have been fully addressed. Staff have worked well as a cohesive team to improve the service and subsequently the outcomes for young people. Despite many incidents at the home the staff team have remained committed and stable and this is a key strength of the service. Staff have built trusting relationships with young people based on genuine care and affection. Staff know and understand each young person's unique characteristics and can provide care that meets their changing needs.

Most of the recommendations raised at the previous inspection have been fully addressed. The numbers of staff on shift are currently surplus to the numbers of young people. Staff are either qualified at Level three or working towards this qualification. All other mandatory training is up to date. Consequently, young people are cared for by enough staff who are qualified as required. A telephone has been placed in the kitchen with information displayed about a number of children's services and advocates. This enables young people to make telephone calls independently. Many other improvements have been made to the interior décor of the home. Paintwork and carpets have been refurbished in places providing a more cosy and homely environment in which young people seem relaxed and comfortable. The games room has been reorganised and provides a base for activities and

electronic games. Young people have use of all the rooms including the utility and food storage areas which were previously restricted. This gives young people more freedom and choice about how to spend their time. Staff have worked with maintenance to improve the house, however, some areas are still in need of an update. The first floor doorways and doors are shabby and damaged and the upstairs bathroom requires redecoration.

There are a varied range of activities both at the service and in the local vicinity and young people are offered a choice of activity from these. Electronic games consoles within the home have been replaced and young people can choose from these or other activities with staff at the home. Overall, the home has made significant improvements since the last inspection. This has resulted in young people who are happy with their placements. One young person says, 'he lives in a family and he likes the home and other young people'.

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 all parts of the home are well maintained and decorated. (NMS 10.3)