

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC372611
Inspection date	14/02/2013
Inspector	Denise Perry
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	28/09/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This privately operated children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two young people with emotional and 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 **inadequate progress**.

At the full inspection in September 2012, the home's overall quality rating was adequate with two requirements and recommendations set. The home's manager has addressed all of these demonstrating the home's capacity for on-going improvement. Since the last inspection the Registered Manager is no longer in post. In December 2012 the company appointed a permanent manager to run this home and her application for the post of Registered Manager is currently being processed.

The home's manager has knowledge and understanding of the home's child protection and safeguarding procedures and policies. While there have been no notifiable events to report to Ofsted the manager ensures team meeting agendas include discussion on what constitutes a notifiable event and associated referral timescales. This means that staff are well informed and able to take appropriate action as required. This contributes to young people's safety and welfare.

The manager actively seeks information from placing authorities, such as care plans. This ensures that the staff team have full information on young people and quality of

care is not compromised. Staff continue to seek young people's views through day to day discussions, key working sessions and house meetings. Where appropriate the manager and staff act on young people's views to secure improved outcomes. For example, staff have recently facilitated and supervised family contact in young people's home towns. This promotes young people's identity and shows them that they are valued and listened to.

While young people have not made any complaints since the last inspection, they do have access to the complaint procedure. However, the young person's guide available in this home does not include full details for the Children's Rights Director and provides an incorrect Ofsted telephone number. Further, there are no contact details for independent reviewing officers (IRO). These omissions could prevent young people from contacting other professionals outside the home, should they wish to do so.

Staff update risk assessments on a regular basis and when young people are involved in serious incidents. The manager identifies protective factors to minimise potential risks to keep young people and staff safe. For example, due to recent incidents of fire setting, the manager (in consultation with a fire safety officer) recommended re-hinging young people's bedroom doors to open outwards. This will improve staff access to young people's bedrooms should a fire occur. While there is evidence of the manager chasing this, at the time of the inspection this work had not been carried out. The lack of company action to address this fire safety precaution fails to promote young people's safety and places them at risk.

Other fire safety concerns were also identified at this inspection. Some young people who have been known to smoke in their bedrooms and were involved in fire setting, have access to lighters. The manager stated that this was reviewed and agreed that young people hand in their lighters to staff at night. However, young people do not always comply with this arrangement and thus this risk is not appropriately addressed. Further, in line with young people's known risks, the manager made an urgent request to the company to purchase additional fire blankets and was advised to obtain and submit a quote to head office. Due to the timescales involved, the process of obtaining essential equipment to promote children and staff's safety and welfare is inadequate.

The manager has made good links with the local fire service and fire officers have visited the home to talk to staff and young people about fire safety awareness. The manager has also arranged for an imminent fire inspection and states that she will meet any recommendations set. Further, the manager and staff team have reviewed and developed fire evacuation procedures to promote young people's safety. This includes providing 'fire grab bags' in the event of an evacuation whereby staff and young people have access to torches, first aid kits, charged mobile phones and important contact numbers. This will contribute to young people's safety and welfare.

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
32 (2001)	take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable equipment. Regulation 32(1)(a))	04/03/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure the children's guide includes a summary of what the home sets to do for children, how they can find out their rights, how a child can contact their IRO, the Children's Right Director, Ofsted if they wish to raise a concern with inspectors, and how to secure access to an independent advocate. NMS 13.5

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*.