

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Jo Stephenson
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Date of last inspection	01/12/2011
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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

The home is run by a private organisation. The home is registered to provide care for up to two young people of either gender, aged between 10 and 17 years.

Progress

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

This interim inspection has focused on the progress made by the home since the last inspection in December 2011. The overall judgement was good, and no requirements or recommendations were stipulated. This service has made inadequate progress at this interim inspection. The quality of care within the home has not been maintained, and the outcomes for young people have declined. As a result, requirements and recommendations have been set at this inspection.

Young people are not safe in the home. Their welfare is not promoted and relationships with staff are poor. Young people state that they are not listened to and that their views are not considered. In addition, they say they do not understand how to make a complaint. Young people's meetings are infrequent and issues raised are not suitably addressed. This means there is no formal system of feedback that can be used proactively to improve outcomes for young people. Subsequently, young people do not develop a positive self-view or emotional resilience.

Staff have not developed robust risk assessments to ensure that young people are protected from significant harm. Occurrences of young people missing from the home are high and individualised plans are not in place to reduce these incidents. As a result, young people put themselves in hazardous situations and are apathetic to the possible consequences of their actions.

Pathway plans for young people are weak and ineffectual and staff do not adequately contribute to, or review these. Young people state that they do not understand the plans that are in place for them or timescales for transition to adulthood. Consequently, young people do not engage with staff and insufficient work is done to address this. There is a significant lack of personalised care planning for young people and subsequently disruptive behaviour is habitual. Staff are inconsistent in their approach to care programmes. Both positive and negative incidents are rewarded and this means that young people are not encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour or believe sanctions to be reasonable and fair.

Young people do not live in a safe environment. Practical health and safety arrangements are not in place to protect young people from the risk of significant harm. Regular health and safety checks are lacking and extremely hazardous home

environment issues are unreported. Risk assessments are not robust or reviewed and do not identify potential sources of harm for young people. Consequently, young people are exposed to considerable danger within the home.

Staff state that doors and spaces within the home are routinely locked. This means that young people have their normal physical movement restricted through the home. It is unclear how such a routine promotes young people's welfare and development.

Arrangements in place to deputise in the Registered Manager's absence are not clear or robust. Staff undertaking this role do not have adequate supervisory experience and this means effective support is not available to all staff. As a result, young people do not live in a home that is well managed.

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
23 (2001)	ensure all parts of the home to which children have access are so far as reasonably practicable free from hazards to their health or safety. (Regulation 23 (a))	12/03/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure the care and support provided to children minimises the risk that they will go missing and reduces the risk of harm should the child go missing (NMS 5.1)
- ensure physical restrictions on normal movement within the home are not used unless this is necessary to safeguard children and promote their welfare and development. Such restrictions for one child do not impose similar restrictions on other children (NMS 10.4)
- ensure that risk assessments of the whole children's home environment are carried out to identify any potential sources of harm to the children, are recorded in writing and are regularly reviewed (NMS 10.8)
- ensure the home contributes to the development of each child's care plan, including the pathway plan for "eligible" care leavers and works collaboratively with the young person's social worker or personal adviser in implementing this

plan (NMS 12.2)

- ensure the deputy of the registered person of the home (or the person designated to deputise for the registered person in his/her absence) has at least one year's relevant supervisory experience. (NMS 17.4)