

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC374640
Inspection date	24/01/2013
Inspector	Michael Williams
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	07/09/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is run by a care company. It provides care and accommodation for up to three children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and learning disabilities. Two children can be accommodated under short-break arrangements and a further child can live at the home.

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 **good progress**.

In September 2012, the full inspection of the home judged its overall effectiveness to be good and recommended one area for improvement. This interim inspection found that the home has made good progress since then.

The care company that runs the home has taken account of the recommendation made at the full inspection: to make their staff selection process even more robust by making telephone enquiries into written references obtained. Although no new staff have started working at the home since its full inspection, subsequent inspections of other children's homes run by the company have shown that they have taken account of this recommendation.

Shortly before the home's full inspection, Ofsted agreed to vary its conditions of registration so that it may provide care and accommodation for two children under short break arrangements and for a further child to live at the home. This arrangement has been working well. The home's manager commented that it has been working better than he ever expected, and that any apprehensions he had

about it have not been founded. He described how it has provided the young person who has been living at the home with both peers for company and quiet times. This young person commented that overall they were happy with this arrangement. There is good feedback from the parents, carers and social workers of children who have had short breaks at the home.

To facilitate proper oversight, since the last inspection Ofsted have received reports of monthly registered provider visits to the home and notification of relevant significant events. The report of the December 2012 registered provider visit concluded: 'A very positive visit. The team at [the home] work together fantastically. [The manager] commented that each and every one go above and beyond in their care for [the child living at the home].' Following the inspector's response to a notification from the home, investigations into allegations of harm are now handled in a way that provides effective protection for children. Staff refer any allegations they receive to the company's designated person for managing allegations, and they in turn ensure that the safeguarding children team local to the home is their first point of contact.

The child who has been living at the home since the last inspection has continued to make good progress. The home's report for the statutory review of their care in October 2012 concluded that they have: 'shown great improvement since beginning their placement in July and have settled well into their new environment.' Since then, they have continued to make good progress, especially with their educational attendance and achievement, and their leisure activities. They have progressed from attending the company's independent school full time, to attending a local mainstream primary school full time, where their achievement has been better than expected. They currently attend a local Brownies group and youth club and visit friends and have friends to visit them. The child has listed 50 things for them to do before they are much older, and since the last inspection they have completed more of them, for example by having recently gone sledging.

During this visit, the home's manager was interviewed as part of his application to Ofsted to become the Registered Manager of the home. The interview recommended that he was suitable for registration; to be in full-time day-to-day charge of the home.

No weaknesses were identified during the course of this inspection.

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*.