

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	18/12/2012
Inspector	Elaine Cray
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	02/05/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is part of a large private children's care organisation and is registered to accommodate three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home offers short, long-term and emergency placements. The home has a school on site, and this is registered with the Department for Education.

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**.

At the last inspection in May 2012, the overall quality rating for the home was adequate. The majority of shortfalls related to the management and administration in the home. Leadership and management were inadequate at the last inspection. There were eight requirements and nine recommendations set because of shortfalls.

There are significant improvements in the home and shortfalls are fully addressed. The Registered Manager has been absent from the home for several weeks and is now no longer in post at the service. Interim management arrangements are in place and effective.

The deputy manager for the home is in charge with daily input from two Registered Managers from other homes in the company. Both these homes have received outstanding judgements and these managers' experience and expertise has greatly impacted on the improvements for this service.

Robust and effective monitoring processes promote embedded improvements in the

home. The interim managers have an excellent knowledge of the legal framework. They carry out regular management checks against this legal framework and benchmark outcomes against Ofsted's evaluation schedule. There are also comprehensive monthly checks by an independent visitor. Internal and external monitoring now includes proactive consultation with young people. There is a strong emerging ethos to maintain and further improve the good standards in the home.

Staff now have a high level of satisfaction with the leadership and management in the home. Young people are safe and looked after because staff now have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Expectations of staff are clear and performance is now monitored with effective lines of accountability. Managers effectively assess staffing arrangements with improved rotas that now show the planned and actual staffing arrangements in the home.

The home is managed well because administration and recording procedures are now more organised and effective. Young people's care planning and progress are now assessed using files that contain all required information. Records are accurate and contemporary. Young people understand and are a key part of the assessment and review of their written plans.

Improved management procedures positively affect outcomes for young people because staff have considerably more time to spend with them. Staff report improved levels in motivation. They are more enthusiastic about and focused on their roles and responsibilities. They feel more empowered because they receive good support and development and are fully involved in the running of the home.

Staff enthusiasm feeds directly into outcomes for young people. They also report high levels of satisfaction with their relationships with staff. While there have been changes in staffing, the young people say living in the home is good because the managers and staff listen to them.

Young people value the improvements they have made to their behaviour. They have developed good negotiation skills. Trust and personal responsibility are important concepts to the young people. Sanctions and physical interventions are very rarely used, and only as a very last resort. Young people are fully involved in their care planning and drawing up strategies to manage risks and improve safety. They feel empowered and valued, resulting in a significant reduction in risk taking behaviours.

Young people progress in education because they receive high levels of support, encouragement and reward. One young person now attends college in the community; another has a part-time job in addition to attending and doing well in school. Young people enjoy a range of activities. They grow in maturity and embrace opportunities to become more independent with positive plans for their future.

Young people thrive and develop in a structured yet nurturing environment that respects individuality. They have good opportunities to understand their backgrounds, develop emotional resilience and positively express their identities.

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*.