

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Denise Perry
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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 local authority home is registered to provide care and accommodation for two children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Progress

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

At the full inspection in August 2011, the home's overall quality rating was good with one requirement and recommendation set within the inspection report. The Registered Manager and staff have demonstrated improvement, having met and addressed these following the inspection.

Young people confirm that they are encouraged to invite their friends to their home. Staff recently arranged a cultural event, and young people and their friends attended. This promotes opportunities for young people to develop peer relationships, and to celebrate and extend their knowledge of other cultures. Young people are gradually developing positive and trusting relationships with staff. They appear relaxed and confident when interacting with staff and say they have specific staff members they feel confident to talk to. They also confirmed that they have access to independent people who they can contact if they are unhappy about anything.

There have been no significant changes to the premises. Young people confirm that they have locks fitted to their bedroom doors. This enables young people to have privacy in their own personal space. Young people have expressed their interests in certain activities outside the home, such as boxing and badminton. However, they are not fully engaging in planned activities. Staff are pursuing this with young people to increase their social and physical enjoyment and skills.

Staff are enthusiastic about developing their practice and are keen to attend relevant training courses. The management acknowledges this and has gained funding to provide staff with additional training opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills base. This includes access to youth service training and opportunities to deliver in-house training on the home's approved behaviour management techniques.

Since the last inspection, some young people have moved placement due to safeguarding concerns. This has had some impact on placement stability and outcomes for young people. Staff followed the home's child protection and multi-agency procedures to ensure young people's safety. The Registered Manager also took appropriate action to review and update relevant risk assessments with regard to the compatibility of future placements. Staff remain in contact with young people

who have left the home and demonstrate an ongoing commitment to them. This means that young people are valued and are able to keep in touch with people who have cared for them.

Young people are making steady progress with their education. They are attending alternative educational settings on a part-time basis. This is providing young people with routine and purpose. Staff support young people in attending school and encourage them to participate. However, staff do not currently have access to young people's personal educational plans. The Registered Manager has pursued this to ensure staff have access to all young people's records. However, if not met this could potentially impact on the quality of care and outcomes for children and young people. Therefore, a recommendation has been raised.

The Registered Manager has made improvements to monitoring procedures. This includes reviewing recruitment checks, such as Criminal Records Bureau checks, through supervision sessions. Staff now sign to confirm any changes in their status with regards to their ongoing suitability to work with children and young people. Other improvements made include monitoring patterns and trends relating to incidents and young people's behaviour. The home's development plan is being reviewed to evidence clear progress being made within the home. Currently this plan does not record or identify any planned changes in the operation or resources of the service. As a result, a recommendation has been raised under the national minimum standards.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure staff have up-to-date information about each child's educational progress and placement. This specifically relates to providing staff with young people's personal educational plans (NMS 8.7)
- ensure the home's development plan identifies any planned changes in the operation or resources of the service, or confirms the continuation of the home's current operation and resource. (NMS 15.2)