

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	29/01/2013
Inspector	Denise Jolly
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	11/10/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is privately operated. The home is registered for three 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 **satisfactory progress**.

At the last full inspection, the home was judged as good overall. A new manager is in place, although they have not yet applied to be registered with Ofsted. The children's home has demonstrated continued improvement in the quality of care and outcomes for young people. Young people benefit from experienced and motivated staff that do their best for them, and help them to weather difficulties in their lives.

The previous manager has successfully addressed two recommendations from the last inspection. Firstly, this means young people now benefit from staff who demonstrate good knowledge of procedures when they are missing from the home. Staff remain energetic in working with all parties necessary, to secure the safety and wellbeing of young people who are missing. Use of correct police procedures enables them to communicate effectively with professionals who are in areas outside of their locality. This improves information gathering about the lives of young people who travel considerable distances when they are missing.

Secondly, young people are now encouraged to comment upon any bedroom search. They engage with staff in one-to-one sessions to discuss outcomes from the search.

In this way, staff present young people with opportunities to learn about the reasons for the search, and to think about the risks that have been identified, such as alcohol misuse. Young people's contributions to records confirm that this improves their ability to make positive choices and co-operate well with staff.

Staff have made some progress in identifying training opportunities to provide them with skills to meet the needs of young people at the home. For example, police and protection professionals have delivered sessions to staff meetings. Staff say that this has enhanced their knowledge and understanding of how to protect young people. In addition, staff are undertaking training to improve their understanding of drug and alcohol misuse, to better support young people who engage in exploration of substance misuse. Staff are supported to complete the minimum level qualification for their role in good time. This improves the quality of care offered to young people.

However, staff recognise that they have not been able to access training to support the specific needs of young people who have demonstrated mental health problems. In addition, they voiced concern that it has been difficult to fully support young people with autism spectrum conditions as they approach adulthood and leaving care, due to a lack of specific knowledge about their emerging needs. However, due to the efforts of staff, young people continue to benefit from care that enables them to progress.

The staff team performs effectively, and demonstrates capacity for progress as they continue to respond sensitively to the changing needs of young people. There are some minor shortfalls in record keeping, such as maintaining up to date records of risk assessments and the absence of some recent placement review and transition planning minutes. However, due to effective communication between staff, this has not adversely affected the progress young people make.

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
27 (2001)	ensure all persons employed at the home receive appropriate training. In particular, training on the impact of mental health issues and autism on the social and emotional development of children and young people. (Regulation 27 (4) (a))	08/03/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure the home contributes to the development of each child's pathway plan for "eligible" care leavers, and works collaboratively with the young person's social worker in implementing the plan (NMS 12.2)
- ensure records are clear, up to date, and contribute to an understanding of the child's life. Specifically, that children's risk assessments reflect all known concerns. (NMS 22)

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*.