

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC386837
Inspection date	10/01/2012
Inspector	Denise Jolly
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	27/05/2011
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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 provides care and accommodation for two young people of either sex, aged between 10 and 17 years. The home is owned and managed by a private company.

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. The children's home has demonstrated continued improvement in the quality of care and outcomes for children and young people. All requirements and most recommendations from the last inspection have been met. This means young people live in a home that is safe and appropriately secure, and delivery of care is progressed through clear development plans. Staffing at the home overnight has been increased to reduce risk for young people. A new visitor book ensures that records are now secure. The management of the home has continued to improve relationships with neighbours and the local community, by addressing with young people and with local police, issues raised in a complaint about anti-social behaviour.

All young people were found to benefit from consistent care practice that allows their lives to improve. All placements are subject to frequent review and managed extremely well through shared decision making and clear risk assessments. Managers stimulate the enthusiasm of staff and channel their efforts effectively in delivering a strong, child-focused service that is conducive to young people developing their potential. The Registered Manager is on maternity leave, and the acting manager who is undertaking a Diploma in Leadership, demonstrates excellent understanding of the needs of young people.

Young people's views are gathered in young people's meetings and influence the home's operation and future direction. Young people are treated fairly and any expressed concerns are responded to in full. Young people say they are listened to well by staff who work hard to meet their needs and wishes. Individual differences are accepted and valued by all living and working at the home. Young people confirm that they feel very safe at the home, and continue to receive a high standard of care from an experienced, competent and qualified staff team.

Relationships between staff and young people are very positive, most of the time. Young people readily acknowledge that staff have their best interests at heart, and ensure their safety as a priority, even when this is rejected by young people. The acting manager has responded robustly to an increase in missing from home episodes. Individual action plans are in place for each young person at risk from

frequent unauthorised absence. Young people are protected with thorough risk assessments, procedures for searches, and regularly updated information on the needs of the young person. This excellent practice enables effective planning to be identified for individuals, in line with their care plans created in consultation with the wishes of the placing authority. To further protect young people, clarification should be sought about the role of police in reducing risk to young people who are missing from home.

The home's aims and objectives are being fulfilled. However, to ensure that children, staff and the placing authority are clear about these, the Statement of Purpose should include more details in respect of staff working at the home, and detail about the use of electronic buzzers on young people's bedroom doors. Whilst consent has been gained for their use, and young people are aware of the practice, young people do not benefit from updated placement plans, which regularly review the necessity of bedroom door buzzers for their safety and well-being.

Quality assurance systems are used to monitor the operation and management of the home, young people's welfare and progress, and the home's records. For example, the manager regularly reviews the quality of care to ensure shortfalls are identified and suitable action is taken to address them. Effective monitoring the activities and records of the home is not as robust as it could be as there is a lack of knowledge of current legislation and guidance. Additionally, reports are not being forwarded to Ofsted, contrary to the requirements of Regulation 34. The Regulation 33 reporting visitor does not capture the views of young people, and this restricts opportunities in identifying areas of weakness and building on areas of strength.

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
4 (2001)	ensure the registered person compiles a Statement of Purpose which consists of a statement as to the matters listed in Schedule 1, with particular regard to the number, qualifications and experience of persons working at the home, and a description of any means of electronic surveillance used in the home (Regulation 4 (1))	24/02/2012
22 (2001)	ensure that electronic or mechanical monitoring devices for the surveillance of children is provided for in the child's placement plan (Regulation 22 (1)(b))	24/02/2012
33 (2001)	ensure the person carrying out the regulation 33 visit interviews children at the home in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home (Regulation 33	24/02/2012

	(4)(a))	
34 (2001)	ensure the registered person shall supply to the HMCI a report in respect of any review of the matters set out in Schedule 6. (Regulation 34 (2))	30/03/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure the home's procedures for Runaway and Missing from Home and Care have regard to protocols managed by the police (NMS 5.6)
- obtain copies of The Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the Children's Homes: National Minimum Standards 2011 to ensure all staff's work is consistent with them (NMS 21.3).