

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC387784
Inspector	Matthew Hedges
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Stoke on Trent City Council
Registered person address	City of Stoke-on-Trent, Civic Centre Glebe Street STOKE-ON-TRENT ST4 1HH
Responsible individual	Susan Hammersley
Registered manager	Helen Marie Malanaphy
Date of last inspection	27/11/2014

Inspection date	17/02/2015
Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged adequate at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

Since the last inspection, young people have made good progress in key areas of their life. Young people attend college or other education placements. They are making progress on their courses. Young people have grown in confidence because of this and are starting to plan for their future. Their increased confidence is also evident in other areas of their life. For example, young people are more independent. Professionals talk positively about this and the progress young people have made. In addition, they are increasingly able to manage their emotions. One social worker commented that a young person had learnt, 'to control his temper'. This allows young people to access a greater range of opportunities and activities safely.

Since the last inspection, risk-taking behaviour has reduced. This improvement has been supported by a staff team that know young people well. Young people talk positively about their relationships with staff. Their behaviour shows that they feel safe. There have been no incidents where young people have gone missing and no incidents involving physical restraint. In addition, there has been minimal involvement with the police. This allows young people to focus on more positive aspects of their life. Young people's self-esteem and relationships with each other have improved because of this.

The Registered Manager has made a number of changes to the monitoring processes in the home. The quality of care is reviewed regularly and clear actions taken to address shortfalls. These changes have brought about significant improvements. At the last inspection, six requirements and three recommendations were made. Improvements have addressed the vast majority of these. Recruitment checks are more robust and ensure that reasons for leaving previous employment are verified. This ensures young people are protected from unsafe adults working in the home. Young people's files have been reviewed and new care plans

implemented. These include young people's views and evidence the progress they have made. There are also new recording processes in a number of other areas. This includes, missing from home records and medication. Health and safety audits have removed hazards from the home and risk assessments are more robust. Improvements have also been made in other areas including staff training. The training programme now covers specific issues relevant to the young people in the home. This ensures staff are more confident in their work. These changes have improved the quality of the service offered to young people.

In addition, the Registered Manager has improved partnership working with a range of other professionals. This includes mental health workers, social workers, education providers, the police, adult services, and other specialist services. This supports young people's progress. Other professionals confirm the positive impact it has had. One social worker commented that, 'Things have really moved forward. Multi-agency meetings now review the young person's support needs regularly. These meetings include all agencies. This ensures that transitions plans are well considered now. The Registered Manager has been very instrumental in this. She is very proactive at bringing professionals together.'

One recommendation from the previous inspection remains unmet. This relates to the fact that some staff are left in sole charge of the home during their probationary period. The Registered Manager has risk assessed this and has ensured appropriate support is in place. This has no negative impact on young people.

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for two young people of either gender with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by the local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/11/2014	Full	adequate
04/03/2014	Interim	good progress
31/07/2013	Full	good
26/02/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

Recommendations

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

- ensure that staff members who are placed in charge of the home and other staff at particular times (e.g. as leaders of staff shifts) have substantial relevant experience of working in the home and have successfully completed their induction and probationary periods (NMS 17.5)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information 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 main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.