

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	26/02/2013
Inspector	Rebecca Sharp
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	20/06/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

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.

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 home's last full inspection in June 2012, the overall effectiveness was judged as good. The purpose of this inspection is to monitor the progress made since the last inspection when two recommendations were made. One recommendation has been satisfactorily addressed: this has improved some areas of care. Staff now know to routinely offer young people medical assistance from a nurse or general practitioner following an incident of restraint. While there have been no incidents of restraint since the last inspection, the company have amended the training course to ensure staff are now ready to apply improved practice when this happens. The staff continue to provide a high quality of care for young people overall, but there are some additional shortfalls in the leadership and management of the home. In light of this, and the failure to meet a recommendation, the judgement at this inspection is that the service is making satisfactory progress.

There was a previous national minimum standard failure in taking immediate action when shortfalls are found during managerial monitoring processes. There are a number of regular monitoring systems in place within the home and the conduct of

the home is reviewed frequently. However, where the manager's monitoring identifies shortfalls in the recording of sanctions, these are still not routinely rectified. Additionally, there are a number of instances where the effectiveness of measures of control have not been recorded in full within 24 hours, breaching regulation. Furthermore, young people do not always have the opportunity to comment on sanctions or the fairness of the consequence. This limits manager's ability to monitor the effectiveness and fairness of sanctions.

With the exception mentioned above, the quality of care provided by the service has remained consistently high since the last inspection. Young people continue to make positive progress in many areas of their lives due to the commitment shown by a child-centred and outcome-focused staff team. Young people feel safe in the home and feel listened to. Consequently, some young people's behaviour is improving and they are beginning to invest in their placement. Young people are encouraged to take part in activities external to the home and to develop friendships in the local community. There is an abundance of opportunities available for them, including attending a local drama class, going to theme parks and going out for meals with staff. As a result, young people develop confidence in cultivating new talents; improve self-esteem and social skills.

Consultation with young people is regular and meaningful. Young people contribute to their weekly plans including what activities they would like to take part in and what meals they would like to eat. They also complete regular questionnaires which form part of the home's development plan and some monitoring processes. However, reports of monitoring under Regulation 33 do not evidence the outcome of consultation with young people, staff or stakeholders. As a result, the individual completing the visit is unable to gain a fully informed opinion of the quality of care provided in the home.

Since the last inspection, some individuals have successfully transitioned into independence. Others are following plans to develop skills in this area in preparation for their move towards adulthood. Consequently, the support from staff enables young people to evolve as young adults and then continues to offer support following their departure from the home.

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
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose which shall	01/04/2013

	include the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure (Regulation 17B (4) (f))	
33 (2001)	ensure that the person carrying out the visit shall interview, with their consent and in private, such of the children accommodated there, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as appears necessary in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home. (Regulation 33 (4) (a))	01/04/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure that where any sanctions, disciplinary measures or restraint are used, children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records kept by the home (NMS 3.18)
- ensure the manager regularly monitors, in line with regulations, all records kept by the home to ensure compliance with the home's policies and procedures, to identify any concerns about specific incidents and to identify patterns and trends and that immediate action is taken to address any issues raised by this monitoring. (NMS 21.2)

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*.