

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC391993
Inspection date	03/12/2012
Inspector	Dennis Bradley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	22/06/2012
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2012

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

The children's home provides care and accommodation for up to six young people. The home is provided by a charity and is registered to care for young people with emotional or 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**.

The home was judged to be good at the last full inspection. However, of the four recommendations made at that inspection, only one has been addressed satisfactorily. Young people's good health is actively promoted and they benefit from receiving appropriate support and advice on good health and personal care. For example, some young people are being supported to complete work books covering such topics as sexual health and relationships.

There is evidence that action has been taken to try to address two of the other three recommendations but this has not been satisfactory. Staff are good at responding positively to acceptable behaviour by providing appropriate incentives and rewards. The use of sanctions to address young people's poor behaviour has reduced. However, when staff do use them, they still often use the same sanction repeatedly, despite it not being effective. Although staff do not now routinely lock the kitchen during the day, they do at night when young people go to bed. This still restricts young people's access to the kitchen and means all of them have to ask staff for permission to use it. This is not a homely approach to managing any potential risks

which may be associated with some young people using the kitchen.

Action has not been taken to develop the home's safeguarding policy to include the recommended information. Staff still do not have appropriate written guidance and procedures in relation to e-safety to help them safeguard and promote the welfare of the young people. The three recommendations that have not been addressed satisfactorily will be repeated.

Since the last inspection young people continue to make good progress from their starting points when they first moved into the home. For example, they are all successfully attending education or training placements. This will help them to reach their potential and achieve economic well-being. Young people also benefit from participating in a range of activities within the local community. This enables them to pursue their individual interests and helps them gain confidence in their abilities and builds their self-esteem. Where appropriate, young people are also learning and developing their self-care and independence skills. This will help them make a smooth transition to adulthood.

The frequency young people go missing has also reduced since the last inspection. However, the records staff kept of one incident are not satisfactory. They do not include details of the action taken to safeguard the young person in light of the reason they gave for being missing.

Young people have good opportunities to participate in decisions about their day-to-day lives and future. For example, one young person described how they had been able to choose the décor and some of the furniture for their bedroom. Staff support young people to be involved in reviewing the care and support they receive. Young people also take part in regular group meetings where they can have their say about how the home is run. This helps them feel valued and included. These meetings also help the young people develop their social skills and positive relationships with each other. For example, the recent introduction of a 'kindness box' enables young people to nominate others who have shown acts of kindness. Staff said this has had a positive effect in reducing bullying behaviour between young people. Young people said if there is bullying behaviour staff 'sort it out'.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure within reason, hazards are removed or avoided and comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, while not conflicting with providing a homely environment, in particular that the internal kitchen door is not routinely locked (NMS 10.4; Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 2.64)
- ensure sanctions for poor behaviour are not punitive but restorative in nature and effective (NMS 3.14 and Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 2.89)

- ensure the home's safeguarding policy includes access to procedures and advice in relation to e-safety (NMS 4.4 and Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 2.67)
- ensure written records kept by the home when a child goes missing include the details specified in NMS 5.10, in particular any action taken in light of the reasons given by the child for being missing. (NMS 5.10)

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*.