

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	28/02/2012
Inspector	Gillian Walters
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	21/11/2011
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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 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.

Progress

Since their previous inspection the service is judged to be making **good** progress.

At the last full inspection, the home was judged as good. There were two requirements and five recommendations made. Both requirements have been met and a large majority of recommendations have been appropriately addressed. The home's Statement of Purpose now appropriately describes the arrangements for promoting positive behaviour. However, the Statement of Purpose does not sufficiently address the issue of incidents when children go missing from the home. Parents and professionals are now regularly consulted as part of routine monitoring; this enables their views to be taken into account and for them to have some influence in the running of the home. Young people's views are valued and are consistently obtained through regular children's meetings, individual discussions with staff and routine monthly visits to the home by the registered provider.

Records maintained within the home have mostly improved with young people's emotional needs clearly recorded in their residential placement plans and details and outcomes of complaints fully documented. This enables staff to have a fuller understanding of young people's needs and the issues that concern them. There have been no recent incidents of young people being missing from the home. However, the recording of such incidents when they do occur is not as clear and comprehensive as it might be in order to assist the reader to follow events. The home's annual development plan is currently being prepared and is near completion. Arrangements are in place for further first aid training which will strengthen knowledge and safe practice in this area.

Young people in this home are all positively engaged in education and making good progress from their starting points. Their attendance at school is excellent and they are well supported by staff who maintain good communication with teaching staff. The home has successfully developed individual behaviour management plans that focus on rewarding individual achievements. Young people are involved in their planning and fully understand the expectations and rewards system for good behaviour. Success with such plans is shared with education providers to ensure continuity of approach.

Young people confirm that physical interventions are rarely used, and that when such incidents have occurred, they understand that they have been necessary in

order to protect them. Young people say that they feel safe and protected in this home and comment that: 'staff are nice and always treat us equally'. Young people share positive relationships with staff and enjoy daily individual one-to-one time with them. This enables them to feel secure and promotes their social and emotional development. The home is well maintained with a rolling programme of maintenance in place. Young people benefit from living in a very homely and comfortable environment.

Young people are enthusiastic about the introduction of weekly planners that enable them to be involved in choosing and arranging their activities for the week ahead. Young people participate in a range of activities that includes swimming, shopping, baking and outings to activity centres. Young people have established friendships with other young people outside the home, and this enables them to participate in community life.

Staff actively encourage young people to develop independent living skills that are appropriate to their age and understanding. A new life skills information pack has been developed. This assists staff in supporting young people stage-by-stage, to learn new skills to equip them for adult life. The pack includes detail on activities such as using public transport, cooking and opening a bank account.

Staff say that they are well supported by the manager and the organisation. Regular supervision is provided and staff report the quality of this to have improved since the last inspection with the introduction of a new system of recording that tracks and ensures completion of agreed tasks.

Ofsted have received one monitoring report from the home as required by regulation. The report, received later than 28 days from its completion, was specific to one month only and did not sufficiently identify trends and issues of concern arising from the Registered Manager's monthly monitoring programme.

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
5 (2001)	update and revise the Statement of Purpose, specifically addressing the issue of incidents where a child goes missing from the home rather than when a child absconds. (Regulation 5)	30/04/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure that in relation to Regulation 34, a copy of the monitoring report is completed at six monthly intervals, sent to Ofsted within 28 days of its completion and identifies any trends and issues of concern arising from monitoring of matters set out in Schedule 6 (Volume 5, statutory guidance, para 3.14)
- improve written records kept when a child goes missing, detailing action taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return, any reasons given by the child for running away from the home, and any action taken in light of those reasons. This means developing a complete record for children who go missing or clear cross-referencing of documents to locate relevant information. (NMS 5.10)