

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC392549
Inspection date	25/10/2012
Inspector	Dennis Bradley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	26/06/2012
--------------------------------	------------

© 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

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for three children with emotional and behavioural problems. The home is owned and operated by a private provider.

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 **good progress**.

The home was judged to be good at the last full inspection. Since then the staff have worked effectively to further improve the service. There were three recommendations made at the last inspection. Action has been taken to address two of these. All staff now receive formal supervision once a month, as specified in the home's Statement of Purpose. This helps staff to have a good understanding of young people's needs and how to support them and keep them safe. Staff are developing young people's placement plans to ensure they identify clear, measureable outcomes. This will help to identify and evaluate the progress being made in meeting each young person's individual needs. A third recommendation relating to the recruitment and vetting of new staff is not applicable. No new staff have been recruited since the last inspection. This recommendation will be followed up at the next inspection of the home.

The management team continually monitors and reviews the quality of care provided by the service. There is also an external quality monitoring programme that involves monthly visits to the home. However, the report format used by the visitor does not specifically cover how young people are supported to achieve their educational

potential and pursue their individual interests and hobbies. Consequently, visits do not routinely focus on this important area of young people's care and development.

The management team is good at using the outcomes of the internal and external monitoring of the service to assess how it can improve. One development is that all staff now have a relevant qualification in caring for young people and some are enrolled on training leading to further relevant qualifications. The home's staff induction booklet has also been developed to include, for example, written exercises for staff to complete so they can demonstrate their understanding of each topic. Also, the personal development plans for staff now include a section asking them to comment on how their practice has benefited from the training they received. These measures help ensure that young people receive care and support from staff who have a good understanding of how to meet their needs.

There have also been improvements in the way young people and others, such as parents and social workers, are consulted about the service provided by the home. For example, young people meet with their keyworker each month to review their progress and the care and support they receive. They complete a consultation document which identifies any issues or matters that need to be addressed. This is one of the ways in which young people are actively involved in decisions about their care and the running of the home. Staff have also recently devised a survey for relevant professionals to complete when a young person moves out of the home. This asks for their views about how the support provided by the home has contributed to outcomes for the young person and how it could be improved. Staff said feedback they receive will be used to support improvements to the service and the quality of care provided.

Staff have also been reviewing and amending some of the home's policies and procedures to make sure they are up to date. The young person's guide to the home has also been revised to include additional information and make it more child friendly. However, the current format does not include some important information, such as how young people can contact their independent reviewing officer or the Children's Rights Director. This could make it more difficult for a young person to access appropriate support if they wish to complain or make a representation about the care offered to them by the home.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure visits carried out under Regulation 33 scrutinise how the home is supporting children to enjoy and achieve (Statutory Guidance, volume 5, paragraph 3.12)
- ensure the young people's guide to the home includes all the information specified in NMS 13.5. (NMS 13.5)

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)*.