

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	23/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC393567
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Neil Johnstone
Inspector	Melissa McMillan

Inspection date	23/11/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged Good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has improved effectiveness. Young people live in a supportive environment, which provides them with consistency, structure and routine. The majority of young people have continued to make effective and sustained progress in their education, social relationships and behaviour. Young people's transitions in to and out of the service are managed well. The young person's wishes and best interests are at the centre of any plans regarding their move. Staff work closely with young people's parents, placing authorities and existing or new staff. This ensures transitions are successful and done at the young person's pace. All young people attend full time education and the majority have good attendance representing a significant achievement. However, a minority do not consistently attend their lessons despite staff encouragement and guidance. This means that they have not benefitted fully from the opportunities made available to them. Staff are supporting young people to prepare for the opportunities and challenges of adult life. They are generally taking on responsibilities for themselves and staff are supporting them to apply for voluntary and employment opportunities to build their confidence and their independence skills. Young people are able to develop trusting relationships with staff. This increases their self-confidence and self-esteem so they feel valued and respected. Staff give consistent messages and provide strong boundaries supporting young people to develop behaviour that is more positive. As a result, some young people have reduced their engagement in risk taking behaviour including absencing themselves the home and substance misusing. For one young person the consistency and stability of the placement enabled them to make positive changes resulting in them moving home with their parent. Staff support young people to reflect on their behaviour, which has assisted them to manage their feelings and frustrations more constructively. Any behaviour management incidents that do occur are well managed and recorded appropriately. There has been an incident of staff calling for police assistance to support a young person displaying challenging behaviour; it is evident that this was done as a last resort to keep both the young person and staff safe.	

Staff have developed very effective links with external colleagues, and these have positively contributed to young people's well-being. Where appropriate young people receive support to maintain contact with their families and are able visit them regularly. The manager ensures that parents are fully involved in their child's care and he provides them with regular updates on their progress.

Two recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection. Although each individual young person has a missing protocol in place, which identifies when the police should be informed after they have been missing. Staff have not always followed these procedures, and have informed police later than they should. On these occasions, staff have not acted appropriately to safeguard the individual, which could have affected the robustness of the response to the missing incident. A recommendation was made at the previous inspection to ensure staff undertook training in substance misuse. This has not yet been achieved. However, the manager was able to evidence that this training will take place in December 2015. This will ensure that staff are equipped to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a young person is at risk of substance misuse and take appropriate action.

The manager's day to day monitoring of the quality of care provided is very evident. This has enabled him to make improvements to the service including young people's placement plans and risk assessments. Placement plans now contain detailed information on young people's particular needs and risk assessments are now more specific, evaluative and identify how each risk could be minimised. This aids staff in providing personalised care to each individual and enables them to proactively safeguard young people. Through regular checks, the manager has ensured that staff are providing care in line with young people's placement plans particularly that they are now addressing young people's cultural and religious needs through key sessions.

Other improvements include the refurbishment of communal areas, the kitchen and several bathrooms to provide a warm homely environment where young people feel valued. Staff audit medication daily and they regularly liaise with relevant health professionals to ensure young people's medication is appropriate and meets their needs. As a result of the manager's continuous monitoring and commitment to improving the service the requirement made at the previous inspection along with three out of the four recommendations have now been addressed.

Information about this children's home

This is an independent residential home that meets the needs of five young people who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. It provides accommodation for young people who attend the local associated residential special school.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/05/2015	CH - Full	Good
21/01/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
25/06/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
16/12/2013	CH - Full	Adequate

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

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 (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
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Recommendations

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

- The registered persons should ensure staff have the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a young person is in any way at risk of harm. In particular, ensuring staff undertake training to support and protect young people who substance misuse. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards, April 2015, Page 43, paragraph 9.12)
- The registered persons must ensure that all staff consistently follow the home's policies and procedures for the benefit of the children in the home's care. This includes young people's individual missing protocols. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards, April 2015, page 54 paragraph 10.20)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection 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

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

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