

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC398253
Inspection date	24/02/2014
Inspector	Gillian Walters
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	10/07/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is operated by a private provider, who has a small number of other children's homes in the locality. It provides a service to five young males, between the ages of 12 and 17 years. The home cares for young people with learning disabilities as well as those who experience emotional and behavioural difficulties. The organisation also operates a school, registered with the Department for Education, providing fully integrated programmes of care and education.

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 last inspected on 10 July 2013 and was judged to be good overall. The quality of care provided was deemed to be outstanding. One requirement and two recommendations were made to promote further improvement in the home and these have all been suitably addressed by the Registered Manager.

Young people benefit from the stability and structure that the home offers and as a result they are very settled and making good progress in all aspects of their lives. Young people share excellent relationships with staff and respond positively to the consistent support and encouragement they receive. Young people report that they feel safe and happy and enjoy living in this home. One young person commented, 'It's alright here. I like it. The staff are sound.'

Physical intervention is only ever used as a last resort and in accordance with the legal framework. On the rare occasions when physical intervention occurs, the home

documents all relevant information ensuring that there is a full and complete record of the event. The incidence of physical intervention in this home has significantly reduced. This reflects the effectiveness of individual behaviour management strategies implemented and the skill of staff in defusing potentially difficult situations.

The home has strengthened its partnership working with local police and other agencies. Agreed strategies promote good practice for those young people who may be at greater risk of going missing from the home. Positive strategic planning ensures that the home is well prepared for any such event. There have not been any recent incidents of young people going missing from this home. This means that they are avoiding placing themselves in situations that are likely to increase their vulnerability. The home revised its policy and documentation for missing children, removing the terms absconding and absconder to ensure that young people are not stigmatised and their behaviour in such circumstances is appropriately understood.

The home has improved the quality of individual placement planning and documentation. This enables young people and all those involved in their care to be more focused on their individual goals and targets and identify the progress achieved. Young people speak openly and with confidence about the progress they are making and demonstrate positive self-esteem. Young people are consistently supported to participate in their statutory reviews, ensuring that they have good opportunity to voice their views and wishes and influence their future planning. The home successfully monitors the frequency of reviews to ensure that they occur within the statutory timescales. Official records of review meetings are maintained as part of the young person's permanent record, ensuring that all staff have access to information about decisions made and any actions that the home must take.

Young people are engaged in learning a range of new skills that will successfully prepare them for independent living. They are supported with tasks such as shopping, cooking, and caring for their own personal laundry. They are able to contribute their individual ideas and preferences for their daily living arrangements through individual time spent with keyworkers or other staff.

Young people's meetings are not a regular feature in this home, limiting opportunities for staff to listen and respond to young people's collective views and wishes. Consequently there is an absence of documented information to help identify the extent of their influence in the day-to-day running of the home. As well as expressing a general dislike for formal house meetings young people are involved in a range of sporting activities that promote their fitness and opportunities for fun and enjoyment. This means that they experience difficulty in regularly meeting as a group to discuss and share their ideas for 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 children's views, wishes and feelings are acted upon, in the day to day running of the home. This relates specifically to finding an alternative means of recording their collective views and responding to those in a consistent manner, given that there is difficulty in achieving regular children's meetings. (NMS 1.1)

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*.