

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC398391
Inspector	Mark Fitzgerald
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Young Options College Limited
Registered person address	Turnpike Gate House Alcester Heath Alcester Warwickshire B49 5JG
Responsible individual	Graham Baker
Registered manager	Carina McLean
Date of last inspection	24/10/2014

Inspection date	26/03/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

The progress and experience of young people in the home since the last inspection is positive. Management oversight of the quality of care is effective. The two requirements from the previous inspection in October 2014 have been met in full.

The home provides a homely, safe environment for young people. It is a detached cottage-style house in a remote rural setting which is decorated in a modern contemporary style. Some internal areas are in need of redecoration and plans are underway for these to be carried out. Areas in the garden have been developed in response to a recommendation at the last inspection, but some external improvements to the building have been only partially completed.

The home is fully occupied at the time of inspection, with all three places filled. The young people resident have been in placement together for over a year. All three residents have had their care reviews in the last three months. Clear care plans detail the support they have received and continue to require from the provider. As a result, staff members are clear about the individual needs of young people and are able to provide them with the appropriate support.

All three young people are engaged in educational provision that is suitable for their individual needs. The staff team support young people's contact with their family and former carers where it is safe and possible to do so.

All young people have interests that involve physical activity. Staff encourage them to pursue these and wherever possible to enjoy activities in each other's company. The ample grounds of the home offer opportunities for several activities, as well as providing some safe space to take time out when required.

Consultation meetings between staff and young people take place weekly, but not as

a group. The one-to-one meetings encourage young people to express their feelings about the care they receive. Topics covered include a review of behaviours, menu preferences and activity choices. Views sought at these meetings are recorded in individual logs which are then shared by staff at team meetings. Feedback is provided to the young people as soon as possible following the meeting. The manager reviews any comments or requests and provides some formal written feedback in the recording log. Some entries have not been completed by the manager and it is unclear whether or not specific requests, for clothes and sports equipment, have been responded to.

A stable staff team provides consistency of care for the residents. All permanent staff are either qualified to the required level or are studying to become qualified. Learning arising from practice is considered in supervision sessions that encourage reflection. Practice issues are debated and clear expectations are set and work standards are made clear. This means that staff are offered an opportunity to improve their practice with the support of managers. Where this approach is not successful, the manager is active in addressing personnel and performance issues where necessary.

Staff turnover is minimal. Since the last inspection, two members of staff have left to take up more senior roles in the sector. The two new staff recruited to replace them have yet to complete their probationary periods. The requirement from the previous inspection relating to legible employment checks, has been met in full. Records for two additional staff were checked and found to be both legible and comprehensive in terms of the checks made by the staffing agency.

Monthly visits and reports by an independent visitor to the home are in place. Reports on the review of the quality of care are submitted quarterly by the registered manager. This was the subject of a requirement at the previous inspection which is now met in full. The manager is clear about the reporting frequency and submission conditions.

The specific needs of the young people mean that they can exhibit aggressive behaviours towards staff and each other. Trained staff, making use of accredited techniques, sometimes use physical interventions. Each incident is reviewed with the young person after a reasonable period, to allow them the chance to reflect and consider how the episode could have been avoided. Records of consequences demonstrate the staff team's responses to young people's positive and negative behaviours. The manager is active in reviewing the content of this recording to monitor the standard and quality of care.

Information about this children's home

This home is part of a range of children's services within a private care organisation. It is registered to accommodate three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/10/2014	Full	good
03/03/2014	Interim	good progress
04/07/2013	Full	good
29/10/2012	Interim	satisfactory progress

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

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
31 (2001)	ensure that all parts of the children's home used by children are of sound construction and kept in good structural repair externally and internally. (Regulation 31(2))	07/05/2015

Recommendations

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

- act upon children's views, wishes and feelings, in the day to day running of the home. This specifically refers to providing feedback when children make requests or comments. (NMS 1.1)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

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 main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.