

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Philip Cass
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Date of last inspection	02/06/2011
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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

This children's home is registered to provide care to up to three young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is owned by a private limited company.

Progress

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

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At the last inspection in June 2011, the overall effectiveness rating for the home was judged to be good. The home has made good progress since the last inspection. The experienced and capable staff team ensure that young people receive high quality care and have significantly improved life chances as a result of living at the home.

No requirements or recommendations were set at the last inspection. However, the management of the home have demonstrated a clear commitment to continual improvement. The home has a development plan that identifies specific areas for improvement. Quality of care is improved because the home has met or has made meaningful progress towards meeting these targets.

At the last inspection, it was noted that communication between staff and young people is of a high quality. The home has built on this strength to support young people to achieve well in education. Young people significantly improve education attendance and achieve to the best of their abilities. In recent months, young people have received awards as 'most improved student' and 'student of the week'. Because the young people and staff interact positively, the home is a nurturing environment. Young people report that there is no bullying, and that the staff are helpful and very caring.

Since the last inspection, young people have made excellent progress. A social worker commented that progress made by young people has been: 'quite miraculous'. Young people are protected from the risk of custodial sentence because they are supported to end patterns of offending behaviour. Young people develop improved social skills. As a result, they have increased confidence and significantly improved self-esteem. A young person reflected that his time at the home had been very positive. He stated that the home is: 'the best place I have ever been in'.

The Regulation 33 quality assurance process is robust and focused on improvement. Where a weakness is identified, clear action plans are identified and the manager is quick to make improvements. The home has good communication with placing authorities and advocates effectively on behalf of the young people. The home

produces clear and comprehensive placement plans that identify the individual needs of young people. However, the home is not sufficiently pro-active in contacting social workers to request that care plans be updated in line with the changing needs of the young people.

Young people benefit significantly from the provision of on-site therapy. A placements manager from a local authority stated that the: 'therapy team is excellent'. The mental health and emotional resilience of young people is significantly improved because the care and therapy teams work well together. Furthermore, the effective combination of high quality care and therapy supports young people to improve anger management skills. Young people take pride in the fact that they have become much better at managing their feelings of anger.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home contacts placing authorities if a change in the care plan is needed. (NMS 25.5)