

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC407169
Inspection date	10/02/2014
Inspector	Valerie Shephard
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	06/11/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This is a private children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

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 **inadequate progress**.

This interim inspection has focused on the progress made by the home since the last full inspection when the overall judgement was adequate. Six requirements and six recommendations to achieve improvement were issued. This inspection looked at the progress made and has raised further concerns. These relate to the lack of a Registered Manager after six months and failure to address some requirements and recommendations. Further requirements and recommendations for the home to improve are made as a result of this inspection.

The home has been without a Registered Manager since the beginning of August 2013. Since then a previous acting manager withdrew from the registration process, which created delay. The current acting manager has only been in post briefly and has yet to submit an application for registration. Ofsted intend to write to the manager about the legal requirement for registration. The lack of a Registered Manager has resulted in the home operating without clear leadership and drive. This is demonstrated by the home's failure to submit independent reports under Regulation 33 to the regulator. While these reports are complete and available in the home, they have not been sent to HMCI as required under regulation. This shortfall

has prevented the regulatory body from having oversight of the home's progress.

Due to management changes and poor oversight there has been failure to address all requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection. For example, the home has failed to submit a revised Statement of Purpose to HMCI in accordance with regulations. The home has only partially met the requirement for consultation with children, parents and placing authorities under regulation 34. There has been failure to implement the newly developed template for this purpose. As a result there is insufficient information from external sources to assist the manager to improve care delivery. In addition, the home's monitoring process is inefficient in identifying patterns and trends. Consequently this does not serve any purpose in assisting the manager to drive forward quality of care and improvements in the home. The acting manager has not received training to qualify her to supervise staff in the home. Finally, a shortfall remains relating to the lack of pathway plans for 'eligible' young people. In one case, a plan has only just been initiated which has meant a delay of three months in moving forward to prepare a young person for leaving care.

Despite the shortcomings in the management of the home, young people continue to receive good care and are making progress in their development. Young people say they are happy and like living in the home. Overall, they attend school regularly and make good, and in some cases excellent, progress in their learning. They are healthy and engage in services which support their emotional and mental health. Access to a range of activities ensures young people enjoy their leisure time and have opportunities to develop new skills and friendships. Young people enjoy positive relationships with staff and with each other which makes for enjoyable communal living.

Four of the six requirements made at the last inspection have been addressed. Young people have access to a telephone in accordance with authorisation by their placing authority. Specific risk assessments rather than the generic ones which were previously in place, support the safety of young people. Records of measures of control are kept in accordance with regulations and relevant information is held on young people's files. Three of the six recommendations are met. Young people are encouraged and assisted to acquire independence skills according to their age and level of ability. The children's guide now includes information on how to contact the independent reviewing officer or the Children's Rights Director. This gives young people the information they need to enable them to access support or advice. Staff appraisals are up to date and take account of views of young people in the home.

Areas for improvement

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
4 (2001)	ensure that the registered person notifies the HMCI of any revision of the statement of purpose within 28 days (Regulation 5(b))	10/03/2014
33 (2001)	ensure a copy of the written report under regulation 33 is supplied to HMCI (Regulation 33(5)(a))	10/03/2014
34 (2001)	establish and maintain a system for providing consultation with children accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities. (Regulation 34(3))	10/02/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure supervision is provided by an appropriately qualified member of staff (NMS 19.4)
- ensure that monitoring identifies any patterns and trends in the home. (NMS 21.2)

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*.