

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC407787
Inspection date	09/01/2013
Inspector	Maureen Hamer
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	16/05/2012
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2013

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is an independent residential home that cares for up to six young people who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: a service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

Good: a service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements

Adequate: a service that only meets minimum requirements

Inadequate: a service that does not meet minimum requirements

Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is judged to be **adequate**.

At the previous inspection in May 2012 the home was judged as inadequate. Quality assurance is adequate and the manager is aware of the home's strengths and weaknesses. The home shows capacity to improve. Inappropriate placements to the home are no longer in place. As a result staff have increased capacity to focus on addressing the needs of young people in their care. Consequently young people are making adequate progress.

The acting manager has been appointed and is adequately managing the home. The home has addressed all but one of the requirements made at the last inspection but most recommendations continue to be outstanding.

Relationships between young people and staff are respectful and cooperative. Young people say that staff ensure that they are safe. Individualised key working is in place but young people's input is not apparent. Care and behaviour plans are in place but young people's progress is not consistently monitored. Care and education staff report on young people's progress on a daily basis. However educational attainment is not promoted within the home. Young people receive some support with life skills but this is not well planned or consistent. Pathway planning is not in place.

Staff report feeling engaged and supported in the drive for improvement in the service. The home's missing from care policy is out of date. This shortfall does not currently impact on young people.

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
7 (2001)	give notice to the HMCI of the named person appointed to manage the children's home and the date on which the appointment is to take effect (Regulation 7 (2)(a) and (b))	07/02/2013
11 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is conducted so as to make proper provision for the care; in particular risk assessments of physical play with staff and education particularly homework of children accommodated there (Regulation 11 (1)(b))	07/02/2013
16 (2001)	prepare and implement a procedure to be followed when any child accommodated in a children's home is absent without permission which as regard to any relevant authority or police protocols on missing children (Regulation 16 (4)(b))	29/03/2013
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home a written record is made in a volume kept for that purpose which will include the effectiveness and any consequences of the measure (Regulation 17B (3) (f))	07/02/2013
28 (2001)	maintain for each child who is accommodated in a children's home a record in permanent form which is signed and dated by the author of each written entry. (Regulation 28 (1)(c))	07/02/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure that children's views ,wishes and feelings are acted upon, in the day to day running of the home and important decisions or changes in the child's life, unless this is contrary to their interests (NMS 1.1)
- provide a comfortable and homely environment that is well maintained and decorated (NMS 10.3)
- support children to develop practical skills such as cooking, keeping food and personal self-care (NMS 12.1 (e))
- contribute to the young person's pathway plan for 'eligible' care leavers and work collaboratively with the young person's social worker to implement the plan (NMS 12.2)
- schedule time into staff rotas to ensure handovers are held and that staff are up-to-date with the care to be provided to children (NMS 17.6)

- ensure that each child's placement plans is monitored by a key worker within the home who ensures that the requirements of the plan are implemented in the day-to-day care of that child. (NMS 25.2)

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for children and young people are **adequate**.

Young people have made adequate progress since the last inspection. They state that they can talk to staff about any concerns that they have and that staff respond to them positively. Young people are cooperating with each other and with staff and this is creating a positive environment within the home.

Young people are registered with local health service providers. They demonstrate progress in managing their anxieties and attend appointments to have their health needs assessed and met.

Young people with learning difficulties show improvements in their confidence and are able to communicate more effectively. As a result their needs are identified and effective actions are put in place to improve outcomes. Young people have an individualised daily routine to reduce anxiety to enable young people to achieve and this promotes self-confidence.

There are improvements in young people managing their disappointment and negative emotions. This is resulting in the development of trusting and respectful relationships and a reduction in challenging and risk taking behaviours such as being absent without permission.

All young people have good attendance at school and college. Young people's educational progress at school is adequate. Young people report that homework is rare and young people show little aspiration for their future.

There are many informal discussions between young people and staff. House meetings are in place and staff respond positively to issues raised by young people. This enables young people to raise concerns and promotes their engagement in the home.

Young people have developed some life skills such as opening bank accounts, independent travel, caring for laundry and developing a limited range of cooking skills. Young people show some success in keeping their bedrooms tidy and there has been a successful transition to a part time college placement. However the approach is inconsistent and there is little positive contribution to the home such as sharing of general household tasks. This hinders the development of independence skills. Pathway planning is not in place and hinders staffs ability to provide effective transition planning to young people.

The home is active in maintaining contact between young people and their parents. Additional support is also provided to parents when young people to promote

positive home visits.

Quality of care

The quality of the care is **inadequate**.

At the last inspection inappropriate placements, which have now come to an end, impacted negatively on the capacity of staff to provide good quality care to young people.

The home is now more stable and young people report having positive relationships with each other and with staff. Staff complete individualised positive behaviour plans and identify sanctions and incentives to motivate young people to achieve their targets. However the effectiveness of these measures is not always evaluated and young people's views about sanctions are not gained. This reduces staff's ability to assess the impact of their actions on young people's behaviour.

Staff show success in setting boundaries with young people to promote respect for others and self-management of challenging behaviour. However the engagement of young people in physical play with staff is not always risk assessed to ensure that boundaries are clear and that staff and young people feel safe.

Staff show an appreciation of the different needs of young people. They are sensitive and responsive to young people's different communication ability and ensure that all young people are listened to and are responded to fairly. This engages young people and promotes their self-esteem. Young people report knowing how to make a complaint and they state that staff manage concerns well.

Staff complete adequate individualised care plans that identify short-, medium- and long-term objectives. In addition, staff on each shift maintain an individualised daily log for each young person. This enhances communication between staff so that young people are cared for as outlined in their care plan. Keyworkers complete progress reports; however they are not always sufficiently detailed to ensure that the requirements of the placement plan are implemented. In addition plans are not always signed or dated and this impacts on the ability of staff to know that they are working to the most up-to-date plan and who is accountable for writing the plan.

Keyworkers have regular meetings with young people but their input is not recorded. This reduces the opportunity for young people to show how they feel about their care and impacts on their self-esteem.

Staff have reviewed how they communicate with school to gain knowledge about young people's academic work and behaviour. There is now daily communication and this is proving helpful regarding supporting young people's emotional well-being. A computer has been purchased as an additional resource for young people to use to support homework. Staff state that they plan to support young people with their school work but young people report that homework is rare. In addition staff do not have adequate knowledge of the work that young people are focused on at school to

provide them with effective support. This hinders staff's ability to maximise young people's educational achievement.

Administration, storage and disposal of controlled drugs is adequate ensuring that use and management of drugs is safe.

The home has had some improvements; for example the bathrooms have been updated and the rear garden wall has been repaired. However in some areas the hall lacks curtains and the front of the home looks uncared for giving a lack of homeliness.

Safeguarding children and young people

The service is **adequate** at keeping children and young people safe and feeling safe.

Young people state that they feel safe. They report that staff now manage negative events effectively and that they trust staff. Young people are adopting cooperative relationships with each other and this is creating a positive environment in which young people are safe. Allegations from young people have been appropriately investigated and notified to relevant partners. Appropriate action has been taken to keep young people safe.

There have been no episodes of young people going missing. Young people have had episodes of being absent without authority. Staff ensure that young people are safely returned to the home and positive action has been taken that has led to a reduction in further incidents. This risk taking behaviour has stopped. However the current home's missing from care policy is out of date and the new one is in draft form. This shortfall has not impacted negatively on young people.

Staff have been successful in reducing the use of physical restraint. When it is necessary restraint is used safely and accurate records are kept of the reasons for its use. Any use of restraint is discussed at team meetings this promotes a consistent approach to behaviour management. Staff are appropriately trained and following the use of a restraint are given support to reflect on the event and to learn lessons to improve practice.

There has been no new appointment of staff since the last full inspection as a result recruitment processes have not been assessed at this inspection.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the children's home are **adequate**.

The acting manager has been recently appointed to manage the home. The acting manager plans to apply to Ofsted for registration. There is effective management in place and the home has made adequate improvement since the last inspection.

Current management arrangements have successfully provided staff with effective

support. Staff state that they feel motivated and engaged in improvements in the home. They report that responsibility for tasks such as key working is being successfully delegated to staff.

Most requirements have been met since the last inspection. The manager completes regular quality assurance and shows a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of care provided in the home. Reports are submitted to Ofsted. An improvement plan is in place and is being monitored to monitor progress.

Good supervision arrangements are in place. Staff receive supervision regularly and their support needs are identified enabling staff to develop their skills and competence to provide good quality care to young people.

The home's Statement of Purpose outlines its admissions criteria. The home is now operating to its aims and objectives. A new admission impact risk assessment is to be used prior to any new admissions to the home to promote appropriate placements. This will support ensuring that the home has capacity to meet the needs of all young people. The children's guide contains the necessary contact details in the event that a young person wants to raise a concern to an independent source.

The manager is successfully providing on-going support to staff to drive improvement in care planning, key working and risk assessments. This is improving young people's welfare. However promotion of educational attainment and consideration of all risk factors are not in place. This compromises the ability of staff to provide adequate quality of care and this requirement will continue.

Only one recommendation made at the last inspection is met. Young people's views of their care are not included in their care files. The home continues to need some redecoration to make it homely. Coherent life skill development and pathway planning is not in place. Lack of dedicated handover time in rotas reduces staff opportunities ensure continuity of care.

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 *Inspections of children's homes – framework for inspection* and the evaluation schedule for children's homes.