

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	21/02/2012
Inspector	Maureen Hamer
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	21/06/2011
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This is an independent children's home that is part of a national organisation and provides accommodation for an associated residential special school.

The home provides care and accommodation for up to five young people aged nine to 17 years who have emotional, behavioural and educational difficulties. The home aims to offer high quality care to young people within a homely and caring environment. The home promotes individualised care as well as the importance of boundaries and routines for young people. The committed staff team work with young people, parents and relevant partners to provide a stable placement that promotes positive outcomes.

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.

This home was judged as good at its last inspection in June 2011. The home demonstrates continued improvement in quality of care provided to young people and to supporting improvement in outcomes for young people.

Staff work successfully with young people so that they are aware of the reasons why they are living in the home. Young people are engaged in setting their own goals. This includes identifying ways of positive motivation so that they do well in aspects such as in the promotion of positive behaviour. Young people's contributions and successes are recognised and celebrated by staff, and this approach promotes young people's self confidence.

Requirements identified at the last inspection have been met, leading to improved staff knowledge and partnership working in relation to promoting young people's welfare. Staff now receive regular supervision and they state that they feel very well supported by the manager and through working as a cohesive team. The Statement of Purpose and children's guide have been updated to outline the services available in the home. However, the guide does not include information about how to access the children's rights officer or the independent reviewing officer in order to enable the young people to gain independent support.

Staff state that their focus is on supporting young people to do well. As a team, the staff reflect on their practice to learn and to improve outcomes for young people. Staff gain information from school about young people's educational targets. They work with young people to promote their learning in areas such as improving numeracy and literacy, for example, listening to young people reading at bedtime. Attendance at school is very good.

Young people's views about the home are gained through the regular key worker sessions and house meetings. Young people are engaged and involved in the running of the home. Young people help with the shopping, cooking and some decorating in the home; this contributes to their sense of ownership and pride in where they live.

Staff keep in regular contact with parents to gain parents' views and to ensure that there is good communication about young people's progress. Staff also facilitate regular contact between young people and their parents to ensure that good relationships are maintained.

The manager ensures that the quality of the service is regularly monitored and evaluated. The views of the young people, their parents and the placing authorities are actively sought and acted upon. The home demonstrates a capacity to improve further.

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 Registered Manager completes a recognised social work or a professional qualification relevant to working with children to at least level 4, and a qualification in management to at least level 4. (NMS 14.2 (a) (b))
- ensure that the children's guide sets out how children can find out their rights, how a child can contact their independent reviewing officer and the Children's Rights Director if they wish to raise a concern with inspectors, and how to secure access to an independent advocate. (NMS 13.5)

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)*.