

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC408369
Inspector	Julia Wright
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Stoke on Trent City Council
Registered person address	City of Stoke-on-Trent, Civic Centre Glebe Street STOKE-ON-TRENT ST4 1HH
Responsible individual	Susan Hammersley
Registered manager	POST VACANT
Date of last inspection	23/10/2014

Inspection date	18/03/2015
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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 **declined in effectiveness**.

Since the last inspection in October 2014 some young people have left the home and others have moved in. There had been a lack of progress for those who have moved out of the home in relation to their transition to a new home and independence. Whilst staff had made efforts to motivate them, a lack of routine, boundaries and consistent care had a significant impact and impeded their progress. An escalation of behaviour and incidents affected all young people at the home has impacted on their emotional well-being.

This inspection found shortfalls in arrangements for the protection of young people. For example, where an incident occurred that should have been reported to the police, this was not done. Consequently, the matter was not addressed as robustly as it should have been and potentially placing young people at risk of further harm.

There has been a failure to report an incident to Ofsted. This failure to notify has meant the regulator has not had the opportunity to review the response by the home to the issues raised or to judge the effectiveness of the response.

Young people's placement plans have not been reviewed. Staff practice is not always consistent with information in young people's placement plans. This leads to confusion about how staff work with young people.

Although a previous recommendation relating to the decoration of one area of the home has been met, this inspection found that improvements are now needed in another part of the home, including broken furniture. These improvements are necessary to ensure that young people live in a well maintained and well decorated property.

Young people who have recently joined the home have had appropriate educational

opportunities identified quickly. Where this is not full time, arrangements are in place to increase attendance within a short but realistic period. As a result, young people's learning is enhanced. The home works with a wide range of other agencies including social workers, health, police and professionals. This means that information is shared effectively, and that appropriate support is in place for young people. A location risk assessment has been completed by the manager and thoroughly addresses risks in the community with strategies to manage these. This promotes a safe environment for all.

There have been changes in the way that information about young people is stored. This has improved accessibility and participation. This includes, the views of young people being recorded as their opinions are sought. As a result, young people's voices are heard. A variety of activities and interests are pursued by young people including horse riding, shopping, cinema trips and community work. One young person said, 'I am always busy. I have so much to do!'

The views of professionals are mixed, with some positive comments about the service offered by the home, and others less positive. One professional was very positive about the difference the home has made in terms of a young person's education, 'Staff were fantastic getting this sorted'. In contrast, others comment about the lack of consistent care.

Since the last inspection, the Registered Manager has left his post. The home is in a period of transition with the appointment of a new manager. The new manager has made an application to Ofsted to become a Registered Manager. The manager has positive and realistic plans to develop the service further. These plans include development of partnership working to improve the effectiveness of the service provided to young people, and the consolidation of the staff team. A requirement made at the last inspection relating to three monthly self-auditing reports of the home has been met. These reports are now sent to Ofsted at the required intervals.

Five requirements are made at this inspection.

Information about this children's home

This is a children's home run by a local authority. It provides care and accommodation for two young people between 10 and 18 who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/10/2014	Full	good
18/03/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
14/01/2014	Full	good
10/01/2013	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
11 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is conducted so as to promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated there, in particular review children's placement plans (Regulation 11 (1)(a))	31/05/2015
11 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is conducted so as to make proper provision for the care, education, supervision, support of children accommodated there, in particular consistent transition and independence planning (Regulation 11(1)(b))	31/05/2015
16 (2001)	ensure persons working at the home report any concerns about the welfare or safety of a child accommodated there to a police officer (Regulation 16(2)(f)(ii))	31/05/2015
30	ensure any of the events listed in column 1 of the in	31/05/2015

(2001)	Schedule 5 takes place, the registered person shall without delay notify the persons indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table (Regulation 30 (1))	
31 (2001)	ensure that all parts of the children's home are kept clean and reasonably decorated and maintained, with reference to the kitchen area and broken furniture. (Regulation 31(2)(d))	31/05/2015

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.