

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Rebecca Sharp
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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

The home provides care and accommodation for two young people of either gender, who present emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Progress

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

The home was judged as outstanding in all areas at the previous inspection. There were no statutory requirements or recommendations made. The home continues to provide exceptional care for young people who, as a result, achieve excellent outcomes.

The home has made significant developments since the last inspection, despite staffing issues. Staff ensured that the care of the young people remained their paramount concern throughout the period of staff shortages. The manager also worked shifts in order to guarantee consistency of care for the young people. New staff have been recruited and are currently completing induction training and shadow shifts. The young people have been included in the recruitment process and had the chance to meet potential new staff and ask them questions prior to the commencement of their employment. The manager empowered the young people in allowing their views to be heard around recruitment in ensuring the right people were employed. This was extremely important to the manager and the other staff as to make certain 'everyone is working towards the same aim' for the young people and the home. Young people are now consulted with as part of the appraisal process for staff in the home. Their thoughts and comments are used to form part of the appraisal, both positive and negative. This is a purposeful consultation tool which the manager feels, 'is important and works' in ensuring the young people's views on the day-to-day running of the home are heard and considered. Their thoughts and comments are also considered in staff meetings as they are invited to attend regularly. Young people bring up any issues that have arisen in their meetings and staff are able to discuss these with them as a team to allow consistency. This reinforces to the young people, the importance of their views, thoughts and feelings.

Young people are also thoroughly consulted and debriefed following incidents of negative behaviour. If a consequence is to be applied to an individual, staff discuss possible sanctions with the young person who offers their ideas on the choice of consequence. These are then considered when applying the sanction. This process has been developed further since the last inspection and these principles of consultation are now used following other incidents such as physical intervention. Staff feel this, 'shows that staff care, and are promoting positive behaviour not just punishing them.' This encourages the young people to consider the consequences of their behaviour and reflect positively.

The home's internal independence programme has also developed in order to suit individual needs. There is now more structure to activities which enable staff to monitor the young person's progress and determine the effectiveness of tasks and identify areas for development. Young people learn valuable skills and put these into practice in daily living such as budgeting and cooking. One young person stated, 'I feel more confident in my independence skills now.' Staff are proactive in supporting the young people to plan their week according to their individual budget. This promotes forward thinking and organisational skills as they are encouraged to incorporate food and ingredients they have already purchased in order to be resourceful. Young people are also encouraged to develop their skills further by using public transport to attend their college placements, which they do successfully. This programme ensures the young people are equipped with the skills they need for their impending move on into semi-independence.

Staff feel that their supervision 'is very helpful, I can express any concerns I have as the manager is very supportive.' Staff support is effective and comprehensive. Training is kept up to date and there is a mentor scheme in place for experienced staff to support new staff in post. This allows a high level of support for newly recruited staff to provide quality care for the young people. Young people benefit from highly skilled and motivated staff as they remain imaginative and innovative in their approach to individual care planning.

The manager has an in-depth development plan in place, which has recently been updated and used as part of a development tool for the deputy manager. There is a great focus on consultation with young people, development of the staff team and celebrating the success and achievements of the young people. There are realistic timescales set for certain tasks and this is monitored regularly. The manager is now looking forward as there is now a full staff team, which will allow for further developments. There are effective monitoring practices in place with the manager completing both monthly, and less frequent, yet more in-depth, reviews of the quality of care in the home. These ensure all standards and regulations are met and monitor the effectiveness of current systems in place. Outcomes for children are considered in these monitoring processes and also in daily care planning. This assures that the young people are getting the most from their plans of care and that these are amended to suit individual needs.