

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC423617
Inspection date	04/03/2014
Inspector	David Morgan
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	04/04/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home provides care for up to three placements young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It aims to develop and prepare young people for a return to family, foster care or independent living. The home is operated by a private company.

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**.

At the last interim inspection, the service was making good progress and at the latest full inspection in April 2013 the service was judged to be good overall. One requirement and two recommendations were made. However, since then inadequate progress has been made despite progress occurring in some areas. This specifically relates to the supervision of the staff and the manager. This was raised as a requirement at the last inspection but the issue has persisted. Staff, including new staff, are therefore not receiving supervisory support regularly or at the intervals prescribed by the company's policies. The manager is not receiving regular supervision and when it does occur it is not being undertaken by someone who is sufficiently qualified and experienced. Consequently, staff are not able to provide the most effective childcare and the manager cannot provide the most robust leadership.

The last inspection also made a requirement regarding staff training. This has been addressed well and there is a suitable programme in place. Training covers the specialist issues that all staff face and is up-to-date. The attention to staff training

has been substantial and means that staff are sufficiently educated to assist young people.

Progress has also been made to ensure that monitoring by the manager identifies any patterns and trends. However, reports detailing this monitoring have not been forwarded to the regulatory body, Ofsted, at the required intervals; the manager is aware of the forthcoming increase in these intervals. There is an adequate standard of external monitoring in place which is under review in line with the current changes in regulations. These processes contribute to good levels of safeguarding in most regards.

There are high levels of young people going missing. However, staff implement up-to-date practices to keep young people as safe as possible. There are proactive efforts to locate young people and close liaison with other agencies and parents where appropriate. Behaviour management strategies are tailored to each young person and the use of physical interventions is minimal.

There have been very few complaints. Complaints that are initially addressed by external agencies are subsequently investigated in line with the home's own procedures. This is appropriate and serves to ensure that lessons are learnt and young people are kept safe. However, when a disciplinary issue arises from complaints or shortfalls in the practices of staff, this work is not recorded in staff supervision records. This means that the evidence and conclusions are not always verifiable.

Young people usually establish meaningful relationships with staff and those who move away often stay in touch. They make individual progress in a variety of areas and undertake to varying degrees the wide range of opportunities on offer. Since the last inspection there have been many improvements in the service in line with the written development plan. As a result, for example, young people are involved in regular positive activities that educate them about other cultures. As a result of the high level of consultation, they benefit from an improved and attractive physical environment both inside and out.

Appropriate safety measures are in place in most regards and the home is maintained well. However, young people are able to lock themselves in their bedrooms in a way that staff cannot override. This creates unnecessary risks.

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
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23 (2001)	ensure all parts of the home to which children have access are so far as reasonably practicable free from hazards to their safety. This is with regard to installing suitable bedroom door locks (Regulation 23(a))	14/04/2014
27 (2001)	ensure staff receive appropriate supervision. This includes the manager and newly appointed staff on probation (Regulation 27 (4)(a))	14/04/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure there is a staff disciplinary procedure which is clear. This is with regard to recording concerns on individual supervision records (NMS 17.7)
- ensure that suitable arrangements exist for the professional supervision of the registered person of the agency. This is with regard to the supervisor being appropriately qualified and experienced (NMS 19.3)
- ensure that Regulation 34 reports are completed at six monthly intervals and a copy of every report is sent to Ofsted within 28 days of completion. (Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 3.14)

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*.