

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	11/12/2015
Unique reference number	SC423617
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Acorn Children's Homes Limited
Responsible individual	Waheed Ashiq
Registered manager	Vacant
Inspector	Mark Fitzgerald

Inspection date	11/12/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged Good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has declined in effectiveness. There has been a significant decline in the effectiveness of practice since the last inspection two months ago. The impact of this decline has been considerable on young people. Safeguarding concerns have resulted in the end of one placement and instability for those young people who have remained in the home. Management of the home has not been consistent during this time. Poor practice in relation to care planning has impacted on young people's quality care. Young people's progress and experiences have been negative since the previous inspection. One placement has ended due to the home's inability to protect a vulnerable young woman from exploitation. Another young person has been hospitalised as a result of her deteriorating mental health. The remaining young person feels upset and disoriented by the number and scale of the changes in the staff team. The current registered manager is not working at the home and there are a number of changes within the staff team. This leaves young people without consistent staffing. Rotas do not meet the needs of young people. For example, sleeping-in arrangements do not offer young people a balance of staff gender. The experiences of young people have been blighted by changes of personnel and exposure to risk as a result of a serious missing episode. Senior leadership decisions have raised concerns with the placing authority, which belief these events may have contributed to their young person's deterioration in recent weeks. The young person required stability, consistency and nurturing care, which have not been secured. The only requirement from the previous inspection has been met in full. This has resulted in new arrangements being put in place for independent visits.	

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/10/2015	CH - Full	Good
23/03/2015	CH - Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/06/2014	CH - Full	Good
04/03/2014	CH - Interim	Inadequate Progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

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 (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
12: The protection of children standard: In order to meet the protection of children standard with particular reference to preventing the exploitation of young people, the registered provider must ensure – (b) that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.	30/04/2016
13: The leadership and management standard: In order to meet the leadership and management standard with particular reference to continuity of care, the registered person must – (2)(e) ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child.	30/04/2016
13: The leadership and management standard: In order to meet the leadership and management standard with particular reference to continuity of care, the registered person must – (2)(f) understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home.	30/04/2016
14: The care planning standard: In order to meet the care planning standard with particular reference to consistency of care planning, the registered provider must ensure that children-	30/04/2016

(a) receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and (b) that arrangements are in place to— (iii) plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority.	
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Recommendations

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

Ensure that staff in day-to-day contact with children include staff from the different gender groups. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 54, paragraph 10.22)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection 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

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

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