

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC423617
Inspection date	11/10/2012
Inspector	Caroline Oldham
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	03/05/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home provides three placements for young people of both sexes between the ages of 13 years to 17 years. It aims to provide a nurturing environment in which to develop and prepare young people for a return to family, foster care or independent living.

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**.

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This home had its first inspection in May 2012. The overall quality rating for the service was judged as satisfactory with no requirements or recommendations set, as the home had only recently reopened. Since then the home has continued to develop and improve the service they provide and is establishing a clear ethos. There is now a full staff team and an acting manager; the team and manager are dedicated to the care of the young people and want to provide a high quality service.

The home is well maintained and artwork and furnishings reflect the tastes and artistic skills of the young people. Young people are actively involved in the day-to-day running of the home, such as helping to prepare meals, helping with laundry and shopping. They meet regularly to plan menus and activities and to discuss other issues about living in the home. Young people speak very positively about the home describing it as 'my second family'.

Young people receive highly individualised, well-planned care which is documented in a Life Plan. Staff work with the young people to create a plan that covers all aspects of their life in the home and external to the home. The document becomes a working tool to review progress and developments. Young people are encouraged to try new activities and experiences such as trips to London, and using public transport. They keep active through swimming, walking and using the gym. This helps young people establish good routines, grow in confidence and feel valued.

Contact arrangements are in place for each young person according to their needs and any other factors. Staff work hard to make these enjoyable and fun events. Staff work with young people to support attendance at school, for example, young people who were only attending on a part-time basis have gradually extended their attendance to resume full-time education. This sensitivity to the specific needs of the young people ensures that they re-engage in education.

Staff put appropriate strategies in place to keep young people safe according to the specific issues facing the young person. Consequently some young people do not place themselves at risk, and respond well to the caring environment. They have clear policies and procedures for responding to young people going missing and all staff are aware of what to do.

Staff develop confidence and skills through the mandatory training programme and team development meetings. Staff aim to manage young people's behaviour through the relationships they establish with the young people and they are gradually building up levels of trust and respect. The home operates reward schemes for individual young people and sanctions are rare. Consequently young people's behaviours improve significantly and negative behaviours diminish. This is significant given the starting points for some young people.

The acting manager has devised excellent working documents to support the work of the home. Systems are clear, streamlined and cross-reference well. Generally policies and procedures support the running of the home but the Statement of Purpose lacks details regarding the placement of a child in an emergency. This does not provide placing authorities, or staff, with the information they need to manage emergency referrals. The organisation carries out monthly visits to the home to monitor the quality of care but these visits do not regularly include discussions with young people, staff and others involved with the young people and therefore do not present a fully informed view of the standard of care provided in the home. The manager has systems in place to review trends and issues of concern. She regularly contacts other professionals involved in the care of the young people to seek feedback to improve the service.

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
4 (2001)	ensure that the Statement of Purpose includes the home's policy and procedures for emergency admissions (regulation 4 (1) schedule 1 (9))	19/10/2012
33 (2001)	ensure that the person carrying out the visit, in accordance with this regulation, interviews, with their consent and in private, such of the children accommodated there, their parents, relatives and persons working in the home as appears necessary in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home (Regulation 33 (4) (a))	16/11/2012

Recommendations

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

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)*.