

Children's homes – Monitoring visit

Inspection date	24/06/2016
Unique reference number	SC423617
Type of inspection	Monitoring
Inspector	Pete Hylton

This monitoring visit

This home was last inspected in April 2016 and was judged to be inadequate with 19 requirements and one recommendation. This monitoring visit was undertaken to ensure that the provider has taken appropriate actions to make improvements at the home.

Actions are under way to solidify the home's management. A new operations manager is being appointed and a new manager is now in place. An application to register with Ofsted is in process and a registration decision will shortly be made. This means that there is now identifiable leadership for staff and young people. This has also led to improvements in the supervision of staff working in the home. Regular supervision, focusing on a range of practice related topics, is now in place. This ensures that staff working with young people are able to reflect on their experiences and share their ideas for driving further improvement. Staff retention has stabilised and the same staff team are in place from the last inspection. This has provided a level of consistency for young people and in turn, has led to a more settled home.

The outcomes for young people are improving. There have been no serious incidents, episodes of going missing or restraint since the last inspection. For some young people, educational attendance has increased and the staff team have supported reintegration back to school. All young people are now positively and appropriately engaged in education. Young people now benefit from a more rigorous approach to meeting their identified needs. Where required, the management has supported access to specialist services of support for young people. This ensures that young people are able to receive services that they need to support their health and well-being needs. This is further enhanced by more effective care planning. The needs of young people are now better recorded and acted upon. For example, where young people have additional cultural needs, these are now recognised and supported by the staff team.

Regular group and individual meetings with young people ensure that staff are listening to young people's views and taking action. This is further enhanced by the management of the home being more closely involved in consultation. Key working sessions are regular and focus on a range of topics. Young people now feel better listened to and respected. A young person commented that, 'Staff always help me, tell me when I have done something good and when I can change things.' Although the key work sessions include space for young people's reflections and comments, these are not always completed. Similarly, the use of electronic monitoring alarms is now made clear in the home's policy and their use is agreed by placing social workers. However, the use of these alarms is covered by a generic policy and not individualised through risk assessment to each young person. There is no demonstrable impact on young people's experiences as a result of these areas requiring improvement.

Risk management has improved since the last inspection. Individual risk assessments, for specific risks and activities, ensure that there is now clarity

regarding the protective measures for staff to follow. However, the management of the home does not have a reliable system in place to monitor and review these risk assessments. There is no collation of these assessments or structure to define when they should be checked and amended. This has the potential for risk assessments to be outdated and not appropriately reviewed. There is, to date, no demonstrable impact on young people as a result of this shortfall.

Staff are now safely recruited and all required details are appropriately recorded. This ensures that only suitable adults work in the home. The statement of purpose has been revised, contains all required details and has been sent to Ofsted. The home's offer of service is now clearly defined and placing services, young people and their parents are now able to review the home's offer. Ofsted have been sent a revised copy of this document. Similarly, the manager's own reporting about the quality of care has also been completed and received. However, this document does not include evidence of consultation with young people as required by regulation.

The home is undergoing extensive redecoration and the views of young people are influencing choices for how the home is being presented. However, one young person's room has insufficient window coverings. This means that young people's privacy is potentially affected.

The provider has made some further improvements since the last inspection. Young people now have a 'being safe' card, which contains important telephone numbers including how to make reverse calls to the home. This is discreetly sized so that young people are able to keep this on their person. Staff recruitment has been revised with more focus on the skills and attitudes of potential staff. Young people have also had some input into this process. As a result, any adults coming to work at the home are better recruited. Sanctions, where used, now include the views of young people. Similarly, young people's views have been sought in the redecoration of the home. The management team has also revised all paperwork systems in the home. Staff report that this has made their processes clearer and easier to follow and understand.

All requirements from the April 2016 inspection have been met. There are three additional regulatory shortfalls as a result of this monitoring visit. A further two recommendations have been made to further improve practice in the home.

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.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that 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 within 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 the safety of young people, the registered person must ensure— (2)(d) that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health.	29/07/2016
13. The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must— (2)(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	29/07/2016
The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (5))	29/07/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff should respect children's privacy and support the other children living in the home to do so. This particularly relates to the use of door alarms being appropriately risk assessed so that they do not impede the privacy and dignity of young people. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.17)

- Ensure that staff have the skills and confidence to communicate easily and understand the importance of listening to, involving and responding to the children that they care for. Staff should understand that they have a responsibility to observe, notice and respond to children who are expressing their views, acknowledging that it is not the sole responsibility of the child to 'tell'. They should also understand how children might communicate their feelings through their behaviour, or non-verbally especially, where the child has a disability, which does not allow them to communicate as others might. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.10)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made by following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about "Ofsted"* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of this guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234 or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for children looked after and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234 or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016