

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	26/01/2012
Inspector	Katarina Djordjevic
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	21/09/2011
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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 is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two children aged between 10 years and 17 years old who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is owned by the local authority.

Progress

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

At the last inspection in September 2011 the overall quality rating for the service was judged as satisfactory. Since the last inspection the Registered Manager has left and a temporary manager has been appointed to manage the home. The staff team, ably led by the temporary manager and the home's deputy manager, have worked hard to address the requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection. This inspection has identified that, due to the commitment of the staff team, significant improvements have been made which have benefitted young people.

A number of requirements were made at the last inspection. They predominantly focused on the management and management systems within the home. These included: ensuring the Registered Manager managed the home effectively; ensuring the home's quality assurance systems are robust and effective; improving recruitment practices; improving medication practices and ensuring young people receive care and support based on their individual needs. All requirements have been addressed.

Significant improvements have been made in the management of the home which have impacted on the day-to-day running of the home. As a result, the quality of care for young people and support to the staff team has improved. The temporary manager has provided support and direction to a committed staff team. She has been ably supported by the home's deputy manager who has been instrumental in overseeing the day-to-day running of the home. Issues identified at the previous inspection have been discussed with the staff team. Staff have embraced the changes introduced by the temporary manager and staff morale has improved since the last inspection. Staff feel very well supported and valued by both the temporary manager and the deputy manager. Staff are recognised and regularly praised for their hard work and commitment. Regular staff meetings have been held which are much more focused and organised with a regular agenda. The temporary manager has attended staff meetings regularly, which has ensured good oversight into what is happening in the home as well as providing support to staff. Staff have been able to raise and discuss current issues and concerns and receive immediate and effective support and guidance. This has enabled staff to ensure systems and practices are implemented consistently and effectively. Young people have benefitted from these changes and have been able to make good progress. Although a new manager has

been identified for the home, Ofsted has not yet received an application to register a manager. A requirement has been made to submit a manager's application to Ofsted.

Systems have been improved to ensure that recruitment practices are robust and that they meet the regulations. This ensures staff are suitable to work with young people which helps to protect them from the risk of harm and abuse.

The home's quality assurance systems have improved significantly since the last inspection which in turn has improved the quality of care and support provided to young people. Schedule 6 checks are much more robust and the findings from these are communicated effectively to staff. Where actions are required, the management team monitor to ensure staff have addressed them. Additionally, further monitoring systems have been introduced which help to safeguard young people; for example, weekly audits of the medication systems are undertaken. The temporary manager has introduced new quality assurance questionnaires for young people, parents/carers and social workers. These are valuable tools for reviewing the quality of care provided, monitoring staff practice and informing future developments at the home. Questionnaires completed by young people regarding staff at the home will be used to monitor staff practice and inform developments. There are plans to distribute the questionnaires on a quarterly basis.

A recommendation was made regarding young people's care plans to ensure they included all identified needs and were reviewed and updated regularly. Significant improvements have been made to the recording of young people's information. The filing system for young people's care records has been reviewed and re-organised making it much easier to access relevant information and monitor care records. Care plans now cover young people's holistic needs including their interests and these, alongside risk assessments, are monitored and regularly reviewed. Young people are now expected to sign their care plans. Monitoring of young people's care has also been made easier by the introduction of monthly outcome logs for each young person. These outcome logs are available to social workers and are sent to the home's Service Manager and the responsible individual. This helps to monitor that young people's current needs are being met and helps to inform future plans for young people. Furthermore, improvements made to care plans and associated records ensure young people's needs are being met and any new areas of need identified.

Young people benefit from positive relationships with staff which helps them raise any concerns and worries they may have. Young people said they feel safe at the home and are very well supported by the staff team. Discussion with young people and feedback received demonstrates how much young people appreciate the support from the staff team and are proud of the progress they have made since being at the home. One young person said they 'love living at the home' and 'staff are really supportive and always there if you have a problem'. Feedback from one young person who has recently left the home included: 'It's a great home to live in and I will miss it. It's brought me a long way'.

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
8 (2001)	appoint an individual to manage the home and submit an application to Ofsted to register the manager in accordance with Part II (12)(1) of the Care Standards Act 2000. (Regulation 7 (1))	26/02/2012

Recommendations

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