

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	18/06/2013
Inspector	Stephen Halliley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	16/01/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is privately owned and provides placements for children on behalf of local authorities. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five children of either gender who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

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**.

This home was last inspected by Ofsted in January 2013 and rated as outstanding. There were two recommendations made at that time. Since that inspection the home has fully addressed both recommendations. There has been continued improvement and development of the home and increasingly successful outcomes for young people.

Weekly fire alarm tests are diligently carried out. One member of staff in the home is responsible for this task. This is overseen by a senior member of staff, from the sister home, who has overall responsibility for health and safety within the organisation. This more structured approach and level of accountability have clearly resulted in all health and safety checks being carried out as frequently as required. This ensures that young people are guarded against the possibility of accidental injury or harm as fully as possible.

The frequency of staff supervision is much improved. This has been facilitated by ensuring managers supervise no more than four other staff. This has allowed for

time to be allocated and ring fenced for supervision or appraisal sessions to take place. This ensures staff receive regular formal support and are able to discuss any issues which may have arisen. This is supported by informal discussions. Staff say: 'Managers are supportive, direct with their instructions and very open to being asked questions. They will always take the time to give us an answer to help further our insight and knowledge of childcare'.

Young people have continued to flourish in this home. They have experienced a range of new activities, including activity-based residential trips with school. These have had a very positive impact on young people's self-esteem as they have functioned extremely well as part of the group. They have also taken part in a range of activities they would not otherwise have been able to experience. Educational achievements are also very good. Young people are sitting, or studying for, a large number of GCSE examinations, have undertaken work experience and college courses and accessed apprenticeships locally. This ensures young people have a sound basis for moving on to the next stage of their lives secure in their ability to achieve and succeed.

Positive behaviour management is a strength of this home, and levels of physical intervention and sanctions are low for the majority of young people. Records are clear and detailed although occasional gaps were noted in the recording of the time and location of behaviours, and in one instance the duration of the restraint. Young people are always spoken to following the use of restraint or sanctions although this is not always clearly recorded. This information was accessible in other records held in the home but it must be clearly recorded in the books kept by the home for this purpose.

The home has demonstrated further improvement since the last inspection in a number of areas. They have two new kittens following consultation with young people. They are looked after by the young people and this gives them a sense of responsibility for something other than themselves. For many young people this is an entirely new experience. Environmentally, the drive has been resurfaced to make it safer for everyone who uses it, the allotment areas have been improved and rebuilt, several bedrooms have been redecorated and remedial work has been carried out on the septic tank. This last point ensures a good standard of sanitary removal and was highlighted as a requirement by managers due to the increased number of young people and staff who use the home. These actions ensure young people live in a well decorated and maintained home which is highly conducive to helping staff meet their needs in terms of security and providing a nurturing, homely environment.

Staff development has been given a high priority since the last inspection. Staff have attended courses to update them in safeguarding, behaviour management and fire training. They have also done lots of work around attachment and child brain development in order to give staff an insight into the thought processes of young people and help them to support young people in addressing attachment-related issues.

The home continues to be rigorously monitored by both the Registered Manager and

an external visitor. This has resulted in the omissions mentioned above being minimised and brought to the attention of staff quickly. The most recent Regulation 34 summary of the manager's monthly monitoring provides a very detailed overview of the home. This was not received by Ofsted due to an error in the email address to which it was sent.

This home continues to provide a high quality service to young people, who say they are safer here than in previous placements. Young people are clear that their views are listened to, that staff address inappropriate behaviours when they arise, and they describe the home as one large, if dysfunctional, family. Although there are some minor shortfalls in recording, the clear focus on continuing to provide extremely high quality care for young people shows this home continues to improve and to make good progress.

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
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose which shall include the date, time and location of the measure used and the duration of the measure of restraint. (Regulation 17B (3) (d) (4) (a))	16/07/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure the manager sends copies of Regulation 34 reports to HMCI at six monthly intervals (Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations, Volume 5: Children's Homes 3.14)
- ensure all staff's work is consistent with regulations, national minimum standards and the home's policies and procedures; this specifically relates to ensuring all boxes are accurately completed when recording sanctions and consequences, especially that young people are spoken to even if they have refused to engage. (NMS 21.3)

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*.