

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC011185
Inspection date	08/02/2012
Inspector	Emeline Evans
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	06/05/2011
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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

This home is registered for up to five young people and is owned and managed by a private organisation. This is a small therapeutic foundation which caters for young people who may have a range of emotional and behavioural difficulties. Most of the young people have therapeutic input from external therapists and the aim is to achieve permanency within a family setting.

Progress

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

The home was judged as outstanding at the last full inspection in May 2011. The home has demonstrated continued improvements in quality of care and outcomes for children and young people by addressing the two recommendations that were raised at the previous inspection.

Young people continue to receive well planned care provided by a committed and competent staff team. Staff provide clear boundaries within a caring environment. Young people have a positive view of the care they receive and they understand the rules and boundaries in the home and state they are there to enable them to progress. Young people confirm that they would be able to talk to staff if they were worried or anxious and comment that, 'all the carers show lots of genuine care and affection.'

Since the last inspection the young people's individual risk assessments have been reviewed and a log sheet has been introduced. The logging system enables key workers to ensure risk assessments are reviewed regularly. Risk assessments are comprehensive and include a wide range of information to ensure staff have access to up to date information. This actively safeguards young people and staff. However, due to the young people's risks constantly changing, staff may not be fully aware of the current risk assessments in operation in the home.

The home has reviewed the medication procedure and a new system has been implemented. All young people now have an individual medication file; this includes the young person's medical history, risk assessments, consent forms and detailed medication administration records. The records also include details of any non prescribed medication. This robust system ensures staff have access to the required information to keep the young people safe.

The Registered Manager formally reviews Schedule 6 items on a regular basis, this results in awareness of key issues and any patterns or trends are identified. Regular monitoring visits are undertaken monthly and provide an opinion on the standard of care provided at the home. Young people report that they are consulted during

monitoring visits and by the Registered Manager at regular intervals. However, the Regulation 33 and 34 reports do not indicate how the views from young people, parents and placing authorities are taken into account in the monitoring processes. A development plan is in operation in the home. This is a realistic document which identifies areas for improvement. Young people are fully involved in this process and are able to express their views in the development of the home.

Young people are encouraged to develop a range of life and independence skills to prepare them for moving on. Young people help with daily chores, laundry and in the preparation of meals and snacks. The home has plans to use the independence unit on the site, in preparation for young people moving on to independent living. Young people feel ready for plans to be introduced and feel they will benefit from developing life skills. However, these support plans for the independence unit are not currently in operation in the home.

The home has developed good relationships with the local community officers and youth offending team. These agencies liaise with the home to introduce preventative strategies and skills for the staff team. This is a proactive approach and ensures that all the staff team are consistent in the management of the young people's behaviours. The manager has introduced weekly information evenings in the home. These are planned sessions and focus on areas of concern such as drugs, alcohol and missing from care. The aim for these evenings is to provide the young people with information in a relaxed environment to enable the young people to make choices. Young people are engaging well in this activity and they are beginning to build in confidence to be able to express their views.

Young people benefit from living in a well-kept homely environment. Young people describe the home as 'nice, chilled out, a good atmosphere and homely.' They are able to relax and have fun.

Since the last inspection there has been a focus on building and developing a new staff team. A new manager and a deputy have been employed and there have been changes in the structure of the senior staff team. This has resulted in a strong committed staff team who are clearly passionate about promoting good outcomes for young people. Staff report that they are able to approach senior staff and management. Staff clearly understand their roles and expectations placed on them. There is a commitment to provide a high quality service. One young person commented, 'living here has changed me; you showed me there's more to life than being sad.'

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that staff are aware of all current risk assessments in operation within the

home (10.8)

- ensure childrens', parents' and placing authorities' views are taken into account and recorded in the monitoring of the home (NMS 21.1)
- ensure opportunities are given for children and young people to learn skills that they need to develop so they are prepared for life as confident independent adults. (Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 2.131)