

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	28/02/2012
Inspector	Pete Hylton
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	03/10/2011
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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 privately operated home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people who may display emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Progress

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

This home was judged to be good at the last inspection and two recommendations were made.

Improvements to the outside of the house have been completed since the last inspection. The front of the home has been redesigned and is clean, functional and well maintained. The garden is similarly well presented. Therefore, the recommendation made at the last inspection has been met.

Young people now benefit from an environment which is less restricted. The restrictions in place at the last inspection with respect to movement around the home are no longer used. This means that young people benefit from an open and accessible home environment. The recommendation from the last inspection has been met.

Young people are kept safe by a staff team who are responsive to their individual risk factors and vulnerabilities. Although all incidents with young people are sensitively and appropriately handled by staff, there have been occasions where the home has not notified the regulator about serious incidents. This has not impacted on the outcomes for young people. A requirement has therefore been made.

The manager has introduced a reward system which has been warmly received by the young people. Positive behaviour is supported and encouraged within the home. Sanctions are applied for young people's negative behaviour. There have been occasions where sanctions have been applied to young people which are inappropriate. For example, there have been restrictions placed on contact with friends, and financial sanctions applied which are not for reparation. Two requirements have therefore been made in respect of sanctions.

Young people benefit from a private area in the home to make telephone calls. A wide range of support services are promoted to young people. However, young people have to ask staff to use the telephone and mobile phone credit is subject to positive behaviour. This means that young people are not freely able to use the telephone. A requirement has been made. Although all young people are made aware of a range of support services, the young person's guide does not include the

contact details for the Children's Rights Director. A recommendation has therefore been made to ensure young people have these contact details.

Young people are encouraged to share their views in regular meetings and key worker sessions. The views of young people are important to the staff and inform care planning. For example, young people are actively involved in helping to plan meals eaten in the home. However, where young people have identified healthy eating plans, these are not always followed. Furthermore, records used by the home do not always have the required information completed in respect of monitoring young people's eating. Therefore two recommendations have been made in respect of health and recording.

The manager continues to have a good oversight on events in the home. Recording is mostly appropriate, although the manager has failed to identify recording which does not meet the regulations. Therefore, a recommendation has been made. There are some clear and detailed plans to further improve the home. These include the purchase of outdoor equipment and additional furniture to further enhance the living areas for young people. The home is well decorated and maintained, and is warm, comfortable and homely.

Equality and diversity continue to be well promoted in the home. All young people benefit from equality and diversity action plans. These plans detail cultural needs and how the home will meet these. The staff team are sensitive to young people's individual needs and cultural requirements. Recent ventures in the home have further explored young people's heritage. For example, young people planned and prepared the sale of homemade cultural food items. The money raised by the young people was used to buy an additional computer for them to use in the home.

All young people are engaged in educational placements. In some cases, progress is very good with young people achieving well. Education is keenly promoted in the home and young people benefit from access to computers to further support their homework and private study. A range of activities are on offer in the home and young people enjoy spending time with staff and each other.

Young people enjoy living at the home. All young people have positive views about the home and the care that they receive. A young person commented about the staff: 'they explain things to me and I know that they want me to be safe.'

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
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15 (2001)	ensure that, subject to paragraphs (6) and (8), the registered person shall ensure that children accommodated in the home are provided at all reasonable times with access to the following facilities which they may use without reference to persons working in the home - a telephone on which to make and receive telephone calls in private (Regulation 15 (4) (a))	27/03/2012
17 (2001)	ensure that subject to paragraph (3), the following shall not be used as disciplinary measures on children accommodated in a children's home - any restriction, other than one imposed by a court or in accordance with regulation 15, on a child's contact with parents, relatives or friends (Regulation 17 (2) (c) (i))	27/03/2012
17 (2001)	ensure that subject to paragraph (3), the following shall not be used as disciplinary measures on children accommodated in a children's home - the imposition of any financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum (which may be by instalments) by way of reparation (Regulation 17 (2) (g))	27/03/2012
30 (2001)	ensure that if, in relation to a children's home, any of the events listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 5 takes place, the registered person shall without delay notify the persons indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table. (Regulation 30 (1))	27/03/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure that children understand their health needs, how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and to make informed decisions about their own health (NMS 6.2)
- ensure that the guide includes a summary of what the home sets out to do for children, how they can find out their rights, how a child can contact their Independent Reviewing Officer, the Children's Rights Director, Ofsted if they wish to raise a concern with inspectors, and how to secure access to an independent advocate (NMS 13.5)
- ensure that all staff's work is consistent with these Regulations and National Minimum Standards, the home's policies and procedures (NMS 21.3)
- ensure that the home has and implements a written policy that clarifies the purpose, format and content of information to be kept on the registered person's files and information to be kept on the child's files. Records may be kept in electronic form, provided the information so recorded is capable of being reproduced in a legible form. Staff understand the nature of records maintained and follow the home's policy for the keeping and retention of files, managing confidential information, and access to files (including files removed from the premises). There is a system in place to monitor the quality and adequacy of record keeping and take action where needed. (NMS 22.1)

