

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035352
Inspection date	19/03/2012
Inspector	Robert Hewston
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	21/11/2011
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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 can accommodate up to seven young people with emotional and/or behaviour difficulties. The home is run by the local authority.

Progress

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

At the last inspection in October, the overall quality rating for the service was judged to be good, with three recommendations set. They have all been fully addressed.

One of the recommendations made at the last inspection concerned how the home reviews incidents of challenging behaviour. A second recommendation related to how staff are supported to understand how young people's previous experiences can impact on behaviour. In response, the manager has enabled staff to attend training courses arranged through the local child and adolescent mental health services. The training looked at young people's behaviour, child development and strategies to cope with complex behaviour. The manager commented 'this has improved staff members' understanding of how young people's behaviour is affected by their previous experiences and how difficult it is for young people to trust adults'.

There are now more opportunities for young people to put their views across to staff, for example, a 'groan and niggles' book, an increase in the number of young people's meetings and a suggestion box. Young people commented, 'you can make suggestions and put moans in the book, which the manager reads and sometimes agrees with our views. This works quite well'. As a result, young people feel that their views are listened to.

The manager is presently in the process of piloting a social pedagogy scheme. He has been in contact with another local authority which is helping with training. This helps staff build up their knowledge and understanding of social pedagogy and behaviour management. Staff spoken to commented, 'although things have not been easy in the last month, we feel we understand the young people better now and have developed good relationships with them. We have successfully reduced the amount of physical intervention and occasions when young people go missing'.

The final recommendation was to ensure that staff are equipped with the skills required to meet the needs of the young people. In particular, this related to the need to keep training up to date with practice development, such as physical intervention training. The manager said that full and refresher courses in physical intervention will be available from the 19th of March.

Young people confirm that they are happy at the home and it is evident that they

have formed good relationships with the majority of staff. Young people are able to tell someone if they are unhappy about anything or anyone. Concerns raised by young people are immediately addressed.

Monitoring processes in the service include detailed auditing by the manager. Strategies to support young people's behaviour are consistently improving as a result of improved monthly monitoring of physical intervention, significant events and sanctions. The manager assesses patterns and trends. He uses analysis and discussion with staff and young people to better inform behaviour management plans. A significant strength of the home is the regular review of care and behaviour plans, to ensure need and assessment is clear and that young people are progressing.

Development plans are completed and evidence is available to show that several areas identified in the plan have already been implemented. For example, there is now staff training in behaviour management models and there are also new opportunities for young people to have their views heard and responded to. Plans are completed annually and targets are set to ensure the ongoing development of the service. The manager receives and monitors regular feedback from young people, their families, social workers and visiting professionals in order to develop and improve the service.

Following the previous inspection, the manager's position is still only temporary. The manager confirmed that the local authority has extended his position until July 2012. However, due to the delay in appointing a Registered Manager, this will become a requirement of this report.

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
7 (2001)	ensure that the individual appointed to manage the children's home makes an application to Ofsted. (Regulation 7(1))	06/05/2012

Recommendations

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