

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	02/05/2012
Inspector	Malcolm Stannard / Linda Christie
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Secure Unit

Date of last inspection	24/11/2011
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The centre is operated by a voluntary organisation, registered as a secure children's home and is approved by the Secretary of State to provide secure care and accommodation.

The centre can accommodate 12 young people of either gender in two purpose built living units. The centre accommodates young people whose behaviour has placed them or others at risk. Education is provided on site and external professionals offer support for young people's physical and emotional health needs. Facilities include outdoor exercise areas and a sports hall.

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 **satisfactory** progress.

At the last inspection in November 2011, the overall effectiveness of the centre was judged to be good and the centre has maintained the quality of provision. At that inspection, seven recommendations for improvement were made. Two recommendations related to the formal education provision at the centre. The progress made in this area will be reviewed at the next inspection of the education provision.

Appropriate action has been taken to address three of the recommendations relating to care and welfare of the young people at the centre. Young people now benefit from an enhanced promotion of their rights. An incremental system is in place which

enables staff to raise issues with the placing authority when young people are not receiving services they require in a timely manner. The need for up-to-date information, requests for visits and support for the young person with placements in the community can also be effectively notified to the authority using the system which is now available.

The recording of repairs and maintenance required to the premises is now more robust. All areas requiring attention are entered in the dedicated log. This is reviewed on a daily basis in addition to being monitored at a weekly health and safety meeting. This process ensures that any outstanding repairs can be identified and action progressed, meaning young people benefit from a quick response to any defects to buildings or equipment at the centre. Details of the safety information relating to cleaning materials are now held in a file available to domestic staff. This helps them to be clear about any dangers or restrictions on use of the substances, ensuring enhanced safety practice for all at the centre.

The reward scheme in operation has been reviewed and is now more equitable across both the care and education departments at the centre. This means that young people are encouraged to achieve and display positive behaviour during all periods of the day. Additionally, the review of the scheme has enabled some attainments to be recognised more individually and rewards to be more meaningful to the young person.

While there has been some development and progress in relation to the remaining two recommendations made at the last inspection, neither has been fully embedded into practice. There has been a further reduction in the use of formal sanctions since the last inspection. Staff increasingly encourage young people to undertake some form of reparation as an alternative to a formal sanction. However, on the few occasions when sanctions are given for inappropriate behaviour, they do not always reflect the misdemeanour. This does not help the young person to relate the sanction to the behaviour.

A new independent living skills package has been devised. It includes an assessment of young person's awareness of issues such as money and food management, personal hygiene, health issues, and emergency and safety skills. Additional sheets have also been produced which enable recording of the sessions taking place and evidence of completion of tasks. The records also allow for details of who is to offer the session to be clarified, enabling joined up working across all departments at the centre. The package is in its infancy and has not been fully implemented in practice across the centre. This means that the benefits to all individual young people have not yet been realised.

Work to enhance the facilities available to young people continues with the major refurbishment of indoor sports and leisure facilities nearing completion.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- children develop skills and emotional resilience that will prepare them for independent living. Further develop the independent living programme and education plans to increase the use of trips out of the centre for preparation for adulthood, education and vocational purposes (NMS 2.6)
- ensure sanctions and rewards for behaviour are clear, reasonable and fair and are understood by all staff and young people. Specifically, ensure that sanctions issued are effective and reflect the misdemeanour. (NMS 3.8)

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)*.