

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC381531
Inspection date	22/05/2012
Inspector	Sue Winson
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	25/01/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is a specialised children's home that is provided by a private residential childcare provider in partnership with an independent mental health community service. The service provides residential care for children and young people who have experienced moderate to serious mental health problems. The home offers a therapeutic environment that will facilitate a transition between inpatient treatment and integration into the community. The home is registered to care for five children at any one time.

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 full inspection on 25 January 2012 the home was judged as satisfactory. Since the last inspection there have been changes to the young people resident so that there is now no risk that the majority of residents will be aged over 18 in the foreseeable future. The conservatory floor has been re-laid and young people have been involved in choosing the flooring, which ensures that the home is comfortable and homely and is well maintained.

The manager has made satisfactory progress in addressing the statutory requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection. More robust efforts have been successful in gaining information from the young people's local authorities at earlier stages, so that they benefit from improved care planning. Each young person now has a key worker and a co-key worker which ensures that placement

plans and pathway plans are effectively monitored to ensure that they are implemented in the day-to-day care of the young people. Young people further benefit from improved risk assessments and risk management planning which ensures that all staff are able to work to keep young people safe in a consistent manner in line with individual vulnerabilities. Monthly meetings take place with other professionals involved in the young people's care to review the plans and look at individual progress. Staff know the young people's plans and are working to achieve positive outcomes. Young people are involved in planning and meetings, know what they are aiming for and are progressing, for example, in independence skills development.

Young people are protected as far as possible when they are missing from care. Staff are aware of the procedures to be followed, in line with relevant local authority or police protocols. Examples were given by staff which demonstrated good practice in raising young people's awareness of the risk when missing, trying to dissuade them from leaving the building and reporting them missing in a timely manner.

Young people benefit from improved monitoring of the administration of medication, however, not all records are fully completed. Practices for administration safeguard young people by ensuring that they have no opportunity to gain access to medications and checks on stock are carried out regularly to ensure that no errors have been made. On a few occasions the administration records have not been countersigned by a second member of staff, according to the home's policy. Where young people have not had medication in the home due to contact, this is not clear on the administration records, although staff were aware of the reasons. The practice of logging in new medication is not consistent. Staff have received training regarding the administration of medication.

Progress has been made on the appointment of staff, and although there are still some vacancies, these are managed by the use of sessional staff, who work regularly in the home and are known to the young people. This ensures consistency of care and young people benefit from sessional staff having the same access to the training and qualifications, as permanent staff, to increase their skills and competence. Staff report improved team working and are positive about the training and supervision they receive. The manager is clearly using the strengths and skills of individual team members to build the effectiveness of the team. Despite efforts to improve the gender balance of the team, this has not yet been achieved, due to lack of male applicants for the advertised posts. Positive and warm relationships between the staff and young people are evident.

Improvements in the recording of comments made by young people, their parents and placing authorities has been started and the manager has plans for further consultation to improve the quality of care. Young people know how to complain and are encouraged to have a voice. Staff advocate on young people's behalf, or where appropriate, encourage and support them in self-advocacy.

Monitoring systems are being strengthened and the manager is in the progress of reviewing the last six months reports under Regulation 34. Not all monitoring

activities are carried out by the manager himself, but are delegated to the senior members of staff. As a result the manager was unaware of the deficits in recording administration of medication. Visits under Regulation 33 take place monthly and the reports are available to staff.

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 the manager regularly monitors, in line with regulations, all records kept by the home, in particular specific incident reports, and the records of medicine stocks within the home, ensuring that missing records are accounted for (NMS 21.2)
- ensure that the staff group who are in day-to-day contact with children includes staff of both genders whenever possible. (NMS 17.10)

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)*.