

## Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC046276                     |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 04/12/2012                   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Michelle Oxley / Paul Taylor |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Interim                      |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Secure Unit                  |

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| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 23/05/2012 |
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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

This secure unit is managed by a local authority. The unit is registered as a secure children's home and is approved by the Secretary of State to provide secure care and accommodation. The unit is currently providing placements for up to 10 young people.

### The inspection judgements and what they mean

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|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Good progress</b>         | 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. |
| <b>Satisfactory progress</b> | 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.                                  |
| <b>Inadequate progress</b>   | 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 **good progress**.

The service was judged to be good at the last inspection; it continues to make good progress following this visit. Four recommendations were set following the full inspection, three have been fully met and some developments have been made in relation to the other one. Several positive developments are notable with one significant shortfall in care practice identified and addressed prior to this inspection visit. Three new recommendations are set as a result of this inspection.

A recommendation to increase the level of work around transition planning for young people was made at the previous inspection. The recommendation has been fully met and some very good work has been undertaken. Collaborative working alongside young people, their families, placing officers and schools facilitate suitable arrangements. Arrangements are well planned and made with a good deal of insight. The majority of young people are well informed and involved in their arrangements and future planning.

A recommendation was set to ensure that young people are given a full response

following every complaint. Young people now receive a letter from the manager following every complaint to ensure that they are fully aware of the outcome. Some additional improvements to the complaints process to give better management oversight and to ensure a speedy response have also been made.

The systems to manage medication have been improved, as recommended. The arrangements are now robust and serve to reduce the potential for medication errors.

Following the last inspection it was recommended that the Registered Manager have full oversight of staff recruitment records. A system has been developed to ensure that this occurs for all staff recruitment records.

The final recommendation from the last inspection related to the provision of a suitable area to carry out personal searches of young people. The room currently used is too small making the process cumbersome and potentially impinges on young people's privacy. Plans have been drawn up with the Department for Education's architect to extend part of the property to offer more suitable admissions facilities. This will enable young people to be received in a more suitable setting. Therefore, the recommendation is not met but positive steps have been taken to improve the facilities in the future.

Some excellent work with young people who have left or who are about to leave the home was identified. These include the effective use of mobility to help young people establish themselves in new surroundings, increasing the prospect of a successful future placement. Additionally, the effective exit planning enables staff to visit young people in their new homes. This demonstrates the team's ability to recognise the importance of the relationships they have developed with young people over the course of their stay.

Relationships between staff and young people are very good. Young people express warmth toward the staff team and the managers. The unit is well ordered and behaviour is good. The numbers of restraints have reduced and levels have remained low, with a total of 12 restraints over the three months preceding this inspection. This reflects the positive relationships between staff and young people.

Staff continue to receive good training opportunities. In addition to statutory training staff have had training to help them better understand the impact on young people's well-being, attachment disorders and sexual exploitation can have. There are some early developments in relation to a new approach which aims to measure outcomes for young people, so that areas for development can be better targeted. Staffing levels were very good during this inspection. Additional staff have been recruited following a short but difficult period at the end of the summer when staffing levels fell unexpectedly low. As a result unacceptable methods were adopted to deal with the staff shortage. This involved young people remaining in their rooms for longer periods. This was carried out in agreement with young people. Nevertheless the practice is not acceptable. The matter had been addressed prior to this inspection with senior managers. Ofsted are satisfied that a clear understanding

has been reached and that this practice will not operate again.

Three new areas for development are identified as a result of this inspection. The décor is a little worn in places and graffiti has not been removed as a result the unit lacks a homely feel in communal areas. Young people are admitted to the home with sensitivity. However, there is a lack of clarity within the admissions policy regarding personal searches. As a result there is the potential for overly intrusive searches to be conducted. There is a lack of sensitivity around personal care issues for young women. Young women cannot access sanitary protection without requesting this from 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 all parts of the home provide a comfortable, homely environment and are well decorated (NMS 10.3)
- ensure that the home is suitably designed in order to promote children's health safety and well being. In particular ensure that suitable facilities are available to facilitate improved arrangements for personal searches (NMS 10.2)
- ensure that young people are supported to understand and manage their own personal and health care needs, in particular young women are provided with sanitary protection without having to request this from staff (NMS 6.2)
- ensure that the admissions policy is explicit in relation to how personal searches are conducted when a young person is admitted. (NMS 23.3)

## 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*.