

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035352
Inspection date	03/12/2012
Inspector	Robert Hewston
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	14/08/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home can accommodate up to eight young people with emotional and/or behaviour difficulties. The home is run by the local authority.

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 **good progress**.

At the last inspection in August 2012, the overall quality rating for the home was judged as good with two recommendations for improvement. This service demonstrates its capacity to improve because it has met all of the recommendations set at that visit. Progress since the last inspection is good.

The home was recommended to improve the reports of the monitoring visits conducted in line with Regulation 34, to include comments from young people, parents and social workers. Action was immediately taken by the organisation. All reports now have good details of discussions with the young people, parents and other external professionals. The reports also identify shortfalls within the home. This information has assisted the manager in improving staff awareness of robust record-keeping and the importance of clear management strategies. For example, young people have been involved in reviewing the sanctions systems for poor behaviour, changing the wording to consequences and agreeing the action of a consequence for poor behaviour. The effectiveness of young people being engaged within this process has reduced young people's poor behaviour and increased positive comments and rewards. Young people spoken to commented: 'It's a much fairer way of doing things and we feel our opinions are listened to, we get on much better now with staff

and don't see the need to go missing.'

The home was recommended to ensure the monthly Regulation 33 reports are sent promptly to Ofsted. Records show that this recommendation has been met. Regulation 33 reports are being sent in on time and show information required to meet the Regulation and national minimum standard.

Young people are making progress towards achieving positive outcomes in relation to their educational attendance and attainment. All young people now have individual educational provision in place, and staff are positive in their approach to young people's education and see learning as an integral part of life at the home. For those young people where education continues to present difficulties, the home's manager is proactive in challenging any barriers to ensure young people's educational needs are considered in line with their peers in the community.

Young people's safety and welfare continue to be a priority for the Registered Manager and staff team. The home's routines and practices are organised to provide an environment where improving outcomes can be achieved. Young people face some real challenges and difficulties because of their past histories and backgrounds. Staff use feedback and information from young people, families, social workers and therapists to shape the care and support needed to help overcome emotional and behavioural difficulties. This approach has led to a reduction in young people going missing, a reduction in physical intervention and improved behaviour strategies. This has resulted in young people being able to spend time with family members, being trusted to return back by public transport, and improved use of community activities. As a consequence, the Registered Manager and staff team have an excellent awareness of young people's needs.

A key strength of this home is the importance the Registered Manager places on his staff team to form meaningful engaging relationships with young people. Staff view young people positively, and as a result there is a relaxed, family atmosphere where staff and young people enjoy each other's company. Relationships are respectful and staff are non-judgemental towards young people. Young people are supported to explore their emotions and resulting actions through regular discussions.

The areas for improvement in the new development plan have already been implemented. Staff have started the new diploma qualification with an extra module on social pedagogy. The Registered Manager has been in consultation with the local university to provide for staff in further developing their knowledge and skills through a design degree course and master's degree course. The Registered Manager's aim is to have all staff professionally qualified within the next two to three years.

The home is due to be refurbished, offering separate kitchen areas for young people to develop the independent skills of cooking and budgeting without having to use the industrial equipment in the main kitchen.

Overall, this home provides good outcomes for young people. Young people have good relationships with staff and are kept safe from harm. Care is personalised and

takes account of the individual needs of each young person. They benefit from the familiar surroundings and a strong team of staff.

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*.