

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	22/01/2013
Inspector	Shaun Common
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Secure Unit

Date of last inspection	26/07/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This secure children's home is operated by a local authority and is approved by the Secretary of State to restrict young people's liberty. Education is provided on site.

The children's home can accommodate up to eight young people, who are aged between 10 and 17 years. Admission of any young person over the age of 10 but under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State.

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 July 2012, the overall effectiveness rating was judged good.

One requirement and four recommendations were made at the last inspection. The requirement and three of the four recommendations have been fully addressed. One recommendation has not been fully addressed and two new areas for improvement have been raised as part of this inspection.

At the last inspection, the registered persons were required to ensure that ancillary staff receive training in child protection and safeguarding children. Training has been delivered to the relevant staff and this assists them to help keep young people safe.

A recommendation was made at the last inspection that there should be information for young people in the children's guide on how to contact the Children's Rights

Director and their independent reviewing officer (IRO). The children's guide has been reviewed and revised to include this information. Young people now have the necessary information to enable them to access support if required from the Children's Rights Director and their IRO.

The registered person was asked to ensure that the absconding procedure includes that young people are seen by someone independent of the home within 72 hours of their return. The procedure has been revised to include this matter. There have been no incidents of absconding since the last inspection. This improvement assists in ensuring there are more robust safeguards in place for young people.

A recommendation was made at the last inspection that all complaints and their outcomes should be recorded clearly. This matter has been fully addressed. This ensures that the unit can demonstrate that all complaints and concerns, specifically those from young people, are addressed and fully resolved.

The registered person was asked at the last inspection to ensure that the plan to address the consistency of staffing in education is fully implemented. For quite a period of time, there have been temporary posts in education, including the post of head of education. Although some progress has been made, such as advertising and shortlisting for some of the roles, the education department at the unit continues to have a number of temporary staff. The recommendation has, therefore, not been fully addressed and young people are not afforded reassurance and consistency that a stable education staff team can offer.

Since the last inspection, progress has been made in one area that enhances the quality of care provided to young people and promotes positive outcomes. A health promotion group work session pack has been commissioned via the local primary care trust. Staff have been trained in the delivery of this pack and have used it in sessions with young people. It includes attention to learning styles and sensitivity to attention span. It, therefore, better supports young people to learn about health matters that are important to them and their well-being, such as sexual health.

There are two areas for further improvement identified at this inspection. Monthly visits by independent persons do not examine and assess, at each visit, the matters set out in national minimum standards and regulations. For example, they do not always assess or examine complaints, sanctions or physical restraint. Additionally, reports do not always evaluate and assess the quality of the matters monitored or the quality of the care provided to young people. This means that important matters that affect the health, safety and well-being of young people are not always independently scrutinised. Managers at the unit are, therefore, not as well supported by this quality assurance process as they could be, to help them improve the care provided to young people.

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
33 (2001)	ensure that the person carrying out a visit under this regulation inspects records of any complaints. (Regulation 33 (4) (b))	28/02/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the overall number, competence and deployment of staff, specifically those employed to provide education, can fulfil the home's Statement of Purpose and meet the individual needs of all the children resident in the home; specifically, ensure that the plan to address the consistency of staffing in education is fully implemented (NMS 17.1)
- ensure that visits to the home carried out under Regulation 33 include checks of any disciplinary measures, use of restraint and records of missing person reports; ensure that there are clear and effective procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the home; specifically, ensure that reports of visits under Regulation 33 comment on and evaluate the quality of the provision. (NMS 21.1 and 21.7)

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*.