

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC402370
Inspection date	30/01/2013
Inspector	Judith Longden / Rebecca Sharp
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Date of last inspection	08/11/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The service is a residential school that is registered as a children's home to provide care for 54 children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The service is owned by a private company.

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 **inadequate progress**.

This home was judged as good at the last full inspection in November 2012. Since then the home has improved some areas of care, and outcomes for young people continue to be a positive feature of this home. The home has met three of the requirements made at the last inspection. However, they have failed to address one requirement which is restated, and have not met the two recommendations made. These are also restated. In addition there has been a decline in some aspects of the quality of care provided resulting in a further two requirements and one recommendation being made. This has led to a judgement of inadequate progress.

At the last inspection a requirement was made to ensure the home's Statement of Purpose includes a list of staff training, experience and qualifications. This document has been updated to include a table providing the required information. This has been met.

A requirement was made to ensure records of restraint include details of the behaviour leading to the intervention. The home has revised the incident recording

sheet and reviewed behaviour management plans. Staff have benefitted from a refresher course in intervention methods. As a result the records provide a more detailed account enabling a clearer understanding of causes for a young person's behaviour. This requirement is met.

The home was required to obtain consent from placing authorities to use electronic door alarms. The home has made progress in addressing this and as a result this requirement is met. All placing authorities have been written to requesting their consent. Many have responded and their consents have been placed on file. The home is following up those who have not responded, however there is no record of the telephone calls made to chase this information. Progress towards this will be reviewed at the next inspection.

The final requirement related to ensuring staff receive appropriate supervision and appraisal. This has not been met. There continues to be significant shortfalls in the regularity of supervision for some staff and other staff have not had an annual appraisal for nearly three years. This requirement is restated.

Two recommendations were made at the last inspection; neither have been sufficiently met and are therefore restated. Young people now have the opportunity to comment on physical intervention but there continues to be several incidents of sanctions and consequences where young people do not have this opportunity. This is due to an administrative error where the revised paperwork for recording sanctions and consequences has not been completely rolled out to all staff. There continues to be inconsistencies in how staff record consequences and the language used to describe the support given to young people. This means there is a lack of clarity in the use of sanctions and consequences.

In addition to the restated requirement, two further requirements are made as a result of this inspection. Following an incident at the home a complaint was made about the care of the home. This was referred to the relevant safeguarding teams and the manager states that no further action was required following this complaint. However, this complaint against the home was not notified to Ofsted as required.

Young people have to ask a member of staff in order to use the house telephone. This means their access to a telephone is restricted.

In addition to the two restated recommendations a further recommendation is made. This again relates to the use of sanctions and consequences. A number of sanctions have been imposed that do not relate to the behaviour that has occurred. For example a mobile phone has been withdrawn from a young person for being verbally aggressive to staff and grabbing at a cupboard door. There are also incidents where more than one sanction has been imposed for one incident. This means young people do not always understand the sanction and may feel they are not fair or reasonable consequences.

Young people continue to enjoy an extensive range of activities and leisure pursuits. As a result they learn new skills and improve their confidence and self-esteem. Some

young people have become prefects and help to support younger pupils at the school and during social activities. This enables young people to develop leadership skills.

Young people benefit from daily routines that provide a framework for development of social and practical skills. Some young people are able to identify that their behaviour has improved as a result of the behaviour management scheme and for many young people there is a significant decrease in incidents.

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
15 (2001)	ensure that children accommodated in the home are provided at all reasonable times with access to a telephone on which to make and receive telephone call in private without reference to persons working in the home (Regulation 15(4)(a))	07/03/2013
27 (2001)	ensure that all staff receive appropriate supervision and appraisal (Regulation 27(4)(a))	07/03/2013
30 (2001)	shall without delay notify the HMCI of any event listed in Schedule 5 as indicated in column 2 of the table. (Regulation 30 (1))	07/03/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure children are encouraged to have their views recorded in records kept by the home, following instances of sanctions, disciplinary measures or restraint (NMS 3.18)
- ensure entries in records are clearly expressed, with particular reference to clarification of consequences (NMS 22.4)
- ensure sanctions and rewards for behaviour are clear, reasonable and fair and are understood by all staff and children. (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*.