

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	18/03/2013
Inspector	Emeline Evans
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	04/12/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This is a local authority children's home, providing residential care for up to six young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

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**.

The home was judged as good at the last full inspection in December 2012 with five statutory requirements and four recommendations for improvement. The home has maintained the good quality of care and outcomes for children and young people.

Since the last inspection, there has been a focus on building and developing the management team. An interim manager is now in post and the home is currently recruiting to fill the manager's position. Ofsted have been notified of the management arrangements in the home. Staff are embracing recent changes with a positive attitude, and in turn, this is ensuring the home is maintaining its quality of care for the young people. Staff report that they are able to approach senior staff and management. They understand the roles and expectations placed on them and they are clearly passionate about promoting good outcomes for young people.

The manager has complied with the requirement made at the last inspection for the Statement of Purpose to be revised and this now includes all the information required by the Regulations. The children's guide has recently been reviewed. This has resulted in a comprehensive guide that is appropriate to the young people

presently accessing the service. The children's guide now includes information on; how a child can contact Ofsted, the Children's Rights Director and how to access an independent advocate.

The home was asked to improve the recording of any measure of control or restraint. New systems have been introduced to the home, which now ensure that all recording is in line with legislation. The system in place cross-references to all incidents in the home. This is a comprehensive system, of which staff are aware. It enables effective monitoring to take place.

Following the last inspection, the interim Manager has introduced a robust system to review records in line with Schedule 6 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2001 on a regular basis. This results in a strategic overview and awareness of key issues in the home. Young people are fully involved during this monitoring process and their views and concerns are taken into account. The manager is also developing communication with and feedback from parents, this will inform service development and a holistic approach to be maintained.

The home has developed links with specialist services such as the Community Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in order to meet the young people's individual mental health needs. The home has started to pursue links with other health agencies such as sexual health services and services offering advice on smoking and alcohol use. However, the home recognises that this is to be explored further and managers are continuing to develop these links with the relevant professionals.

The manager is aware of the process of informing Ofsted of notifiable events and how this allows the regulator to engage in effective monitoring. The manager has cascaded this information down to senior staff so they are aware of the process to follow; this ensures that the appropriate people are notified immediately of any serious incident. Since the last inspection, there have not been any incidents which have required Ofsted to be informed.

A recommendation was set on the previous inspection in relation to the need to provide a homely environment that is well maintained and decorated. Some repairs are needed and the home is showing signs of wear and tear. Quotes have been obtained and maintenance work is due to commence with the aim of enabling young people to enjoy a safe and pleasant environment. This has yet to be completed; this recommendation has therefore been re-stated.

Regular fire drills have taken place to ensure staff and young people are fully aware of the action to take in the event of fire. However the emergency evacuation plan could not be located at the time of inspection, therefore is not easily accessible to staff and visitors. Staff confirm they are aware of the evacuation plan and this is communicated to young people and visitors; this ensures their safety is not compromised.

There is a commitment from the new management and all the staff within the home

to further improve outcomes for young people and raise the standard of care. Some of the recommendations from the last inspection have not been met these have therefore been re-stated. Young people are positive about the support that they receive and say they have good relationships with 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 the home develops good links with specialist health agencies, with particular reference to services providing advice on sexual health, smoking and alcohol use (NMS 6.9)
- provide a comfortable and homely environment that is well maintained and decorated (NMS 10.3)
- ensure there is an up-to-date emergency escape plan that all staff and children are familiar with (NMS 10.9)
- ensure all staff receive annual appraisals. (NMS 19.6)

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*.