

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	10/07/2013
Inspector	Joanna Heller
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	11/03/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is one of a small group of homes which are privately owned. The organisation also operates two schools. This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children of either gender. The home offers care and accommodation for children who have 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**.

At the previous inspection in March 2013, the home was judged as good. Three recommendations were made at that inspection regarding the quality of cross-referencing information, ensuring staff use only the home's agreed techniques for physical restraint, and ensuring that all staff and young people are familiar with the home's emergency escape plan. The quality of record keeping is strong and information from incident reports can now be accessed and cross referenced relatively easily. All staff and young people have recently taken part in a fire evacuation practice; this ensures that they now know what to do in the event of an emergency.

Staff have on one occasion used non-approved techniques to manage a specific incident to protect staff and the young person from further injury. This recommendation is therefore repeated. The organisation swiftly conducted a full review of this restraint in order to understand if the situation could have been managed differently. This review concluded that staff acted with reasonable force to

secure a safe situation when approved techniques failed. The organisation is therefore proactive in its response and monitoring of incidents, looking at lessons which can be learned. Restraint is used within the home only when young people present a significant risk to themselves or others. Records of any incidents of restraint are detailed. Young people are always given the opportunity to reflect with staff on the restraint and are encouraged to consider how such incidents may be avoided in the future. Staff are proactive in identifying triggers and possible causes of challenging behaviour, linking with other professionals as appropriate.

The quality of care in the home remains strong. Young people benefit from personalised child-focused care which meets their individual needs. Placing authorities and young people's families are highly positive about the care provided.

Young people are consulted on all aspects of their lives and are fully involved in the decision-making process. Young people are healthy and making good individual progress in their education. A variety of activities are provided and young people are able to enjoy an active lifestyle. Particular favourites are walks, bowling, bike rides and fishing. Young people are currently planning activities, such as trips to theme parks, for the summer holidays. Young people are supported by high staffing levels which means that they are able to go out when they want to.

Staff are successful in helping young people develop their independence skills. Some young people are now able to travel independently in the community on public transport, having learnt these skills while at the home. Young people who are preparing to move on to adult accommodation are well supported and are fully involved in the process.

Young people say they like living in the home and say that they like the staff. One young person said, 'they care for us nicely'. No young people have gone missing from the home since the last inspection. Staff are proactive at identifying and addressing any potential conflict in the group. One young person commented, 'staff noticed that I was starting to get bullied and they dealt with this straight away, I didn't have to ask.' Young people are fully aware of the complaints procedure and have confidence in the staff to respond to any concerns that they may have.

The home's Statement of Purpose is not sufficiently detailed and does not meet current regulatory requirements. For example, there is limited information regarding staffing arrangements, or how the home will manage emergency admissions. One young person has recently reached their 18th birthday and the home is in the process of updating the risk assessments in place.

The manager ensures that care is individualised and young people have individual responses to their behaviour which is set out in the young person's individual positive handling plan. Positive behaviour is rewarded through individual incentive schemes, and older young people are able to earn up to £25 a week through this. Some young people have lived at the home for a number of years and this is a mostly settled group of young people who have lived together for over a year and a half. This continuity allows young people to develop strong relationships with staff.

The building is suitable to meet the needs of the young people. Each young person has their own personalised bedroom. Key communal areas such as the lounge are comfortable, and a redecoration programme is currently being undertaken which is enhancing the standard of accommodation.

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
4 (2001)	compile a written Statement of Purpose which consists of a statement as to the matters listed in Schedule 1. (Regulation 4 (1))	04/10/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure that where children's homes use restraint, staff are trained in the use of physical restraint techniques and only use the home's agreed techniques. (NMS 3.15)

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*.