

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC407753
Inspection date	11/09/2013
Inspector	Jim Palmer
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	16/05/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The service is run by an established private provider. The home is registered to provide medium to long term care and accommodation for up to four young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities. The home is managed as two separate units within one house.

The registered provider bases its practices on the integration of home, education and therapeutic services working together to meet the needs of the child. Young people living in the home can attend a school also run by the provider and have access to in-house therapeutic support.

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 full inspection in May 2013, the overall effectiveness was judged as good. Two statutory requirements and one good practice recommendation were made at that time. The service has taken effective measures to address each of the areas identified for improvement.

The service was asked to ensure that no restrictions are placed on young people's access to a telephone unless there are clear indications that a young person may be placed at risk. As a result the arrangements have been reviewed; most young people now have access to a telephone that they may use privately without consulting staff. Where any restrictions are in place, these are detailed in placement plans, agreed

with social worker and are regularly reviewed with a view to reducing any restriction at the earliest possibility.

The home was also asked to ensure that any review of the quality of the service was forwarded to Ofsted as required; these are now being regularly received by Ofsted. The home also has introduced a number of measures to effectively improve the quality of service provision since that last inspection. These include strengthening of staff supervision by focusing more on outcomes for young people and setting measurable targets for staff. Where additional support or training is identified as necessary, this is provided for staff.

In addition, the home has introduced a new information pack for key workers, to ensure they are well informed with up-to-date information about topics they may discuss with young people in one-to-one meetings, for example raising young people's awareness of child sexual exploitation. These practice developments help to ensure that young people are effectively supported in acquiring the ability to make safe choices about their future lifestyles.

At the previous inspection, the service was also asked to review the methods of physical intervention used to ensure that all holds comply with current government guidance. Since that time a review has been carried out and as a result some holds have been removed from the approved list of holds. New guidance has been issued to staff, along with examples of how staff should record any incident of physical restraint. No young people have been restrained since the last inspection.

All young people continue to make steady progress and are meeting the objectives set out in their placement plans. Young people are making particularly good progress in developing social skills, self-confidence and esteem. This includes improving independence skills and for some young people travelling independently to college or social activities. Young people are proud of and enthusiastic about the progress they are making.

Young people continue to make good progress in their education and regularly attend school and college. They also enjoy a wide range of leisure activities. Young people are generally happy about living in the home and have good relationships with staff and each other. Each young person says they feel safe in the home and that staff support them by offering advice and guidance when requested to do so. As a result most young people feel more confident in their ability to successfully manage conflict and understand other people's points of view.

Despite the progress made since the last inspection, there have been some changes in staffing arising from staff disciplinary action. Whilst the service took prompt action to ensure the on-going interests of young people, they did not fully follow referral procedures and there was a delay consulting appropriate agencies. Subsequent to these events the service has introduced new policies and practice guidance for staff, along with improved supervision arrangements. However not all of the issues have yet been fully addressed.

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
16 (2001)	ensure that prompt referral to the local authority of any concern affecting the welfare of a child, namely prior to undertaking any investigation. (Regulation 16(2) (b))	30/09/2013

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*.