

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	26/11/2013
Inspector	Paul Scott
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Secure Unit

Date of last inspection	16/05/2013
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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 within purpose-built classrooms.

The children's home can accommodate up to 20 young people, who are aged between 10 and 17 years. The 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 **good progress**.

This interim inspection focuses on the progress made by the centre since the last full inspection in May 2013, at which the judgement for overall effectiveness was outstanding. Quality of care and outcomes for young people continue to improve and good progress has been made in addressing the recommendations made at the previous inspection.

The manager has taken suitable action to address three of the recommendations raised at the previous inspection. Monitoring by the provider has improved. The level of evaluation and scrutiny by visitors has increased and young people's views are now gathered at each visit. Reports are increasingly detailed and provide a more reflective account of the overall conduct of the centre. As a result, areas for improvement are identified, enabling the manager to take suitable action to improve the quality of care provided to young people. Systems for notification of significant

events have been improved to ensure all serious incidents are reported to the appropriate agencies, including Ofsted. Processes for the setting and completing homework have been formalised. This facilitates better planning in terms of the support young people need, including the least confident learners, to improve their reading and writing skills. One young person spoke about how he enjoyed reading with care staff and how much he had improved. Three further recommendations were made at the last inspection relating specifically to the centre's education. These will be reviewed by learning and skills inspectors at the next full inspection.

Young people continue to live in a safe, caring and supportive environment. They speak with high regard about their care and acknowledge the progress they make relative to their time at the centre. Staff encourage young people to understand and address their offending and risk taking behaviour. They provide young people with good support, opportunities, advice and guidance. As a result, young people become more resilient and take an increased responsibility for shaping their lives.

The centre is part way through a major rebuilding and development programme that has, and will continue to enhance the quality of care for young people. Phase one was completed in September 2014 when a group of young people moved into brand new living accommodation. This transition was managed effectively to ensure young people's security and welfare was maintained and with minimum disruption to young people's routines. Young people confirm this has been a positive move. They say they like their new unit and that they have been fully involved in the move, including choosing furniture and personalising their new bedrooms. A proposal to open a second new unit was considered during this inspection. This will facilitate refurbishment of bathrooms in two of the older residential units and improve the already high standards of accommodation provided for young people.

A small number of new staff have been recruited since the last inspection. They bring residential experience, training and knowledge to an already established and competent staff team. New staff are well supported through the process of supervision and induction, including completion of the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction standards.

Young people continue to benefit from a caring and committed staff team. Staff make good use of their relationships with young people and behaviour management training to sensitively manage, what is at times, very challenging behaviour. Some staff came to the organisation with behaviour management training but this is not in the centre's approved restraint techniques. Also, there is no written guidance that clearly outlines the centre's expectations in relation to untrained staff's role when physical intervention is unavoidable. If restraint has been necessary and new staff have been involved in these incidents, this has been under the guidance of experienced and trained staff.

All incidents of restraint are subject to rigorous scrutiny as part of the centre's commitment to the minimisation of restraint, including reviewing incidents using close circuit television (CCTV). Scrutiny of incidents via this method confirms the involvement of newly appointed staff was minimal and necessary to prevent young

people harming themselves or others. Records of all restraints are maintained by the centre. However, a number of these do not provide sufficient detail to explain what role each member of staff took in the restraint. Given that CCTV footage is only kept for a short amount of time, the absence of written records may leave staff vulnerable to challenge or complaint at a later date.

Young people's individual needs are assessed at the point of admission. This information is used to inform individual teaching and support programmes, including developing communication tools that aid learning and understanding, as well as referring to specialist services if necessary. A number of staff have completed accredited speech, language and communication training. This was in response to the high proportion of young people in custodial settings that were identified as needing additional support in these areas. Staff have creatively used these techniques to overcome barriers to communication and enhance young people's level of understanding, for example, developing a pictorial explanation of young people's licencing conditions when discharged from the centre.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure only staff trained in the home's physical restraint techniques use restraint and that there is clear written guidance available for untrained staff that clearly states this (NMS 3.3)
- improve the quality of information recorded in the home's restraint records, specifically, ensure if staff resort to the use of restraint, this is carefully recorded with full details, specifically, that there is sufficient detail in these records to identify the role each staff member takes during the physical restraint. (Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 2.91)

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*.