

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC439535
<b>Inspection date</b>	18/12/2013
<b>Inspector</b>	Ann-Marie Born
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Interim
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	24/04/2013
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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

The children's home is provided by a private company and cares for up to five young people of either gender. The home is registered to care for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

### The inspection judgements and what they mean

<b>Good progress</b>	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.
<b>Satisfactory progress</b>	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.
<b>Inadequate progress</b>	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 home was judged as good at the previous full inspection in April 2013. Following this interim inspection the home is judged to be making good progress and has successfully addressed two of the three recommendations previously identified. This inspection identifies a requirement relating to monitoring processes; repeats a previous recommendation relating to recruitment processes and adds a recommendation to improve the fabric of the home.

Young people are safeguarded by improved recruitment processes which ensure that all appropriate Criminal Records Bureau disclosures are obtained. However, staff files are not complete in that the dates of the verification of references have not been recorded in line with the company's own procedures.

Young people feel cared for, protected and safe in the home where safeguarding is a priority. There is strong partnership working with all agencies involved in a young person's care. This ensures that all professionals work together to provide consistent safety messages for young people. Staff are knowledgeable about young people's

specific vulnerabilities and ensure risk assessments and plans for their safety address their individual needs. As a result, young people are safe at home, their safety in the community is promoted and they are in the process of developing appropriate self-protection skills. A parent commented: 'I'm glad she's in safe hands because she's doing so well. I couldn't be happier she's doing so well and is so happy'.

Young people each identify individual staff members they can talk to if they have any concerns. They understand the complaint process and are evidently confident in verbalising any grumbles. Strong links with external independent advocates ensure that young people have a choice of contacts with whom to raise any concerns if they wish. Much improved recording processes ensure young people are informed as to the outcome of any complaint and given the opportunity to express their feelings. As a result, young people feel heard and monitoring processes are enhanced.

Independent monitoring visits routinely contribute to improvements, including ascertaining young people's views on their care and experiences. The manager routinely audits all matters in line with legislation. However, young people's views on their care, nor those of their parents or professionals, are utilised as part of the manager's monitoring processes. Consequently, young people and other interested parties are not being provided with the opportunity to influence the development of the home.

The committed and nurturing manager and staff team are ambitious for the young people in their care. Education is highly valued and some young people have attained exceptional examination results leading to placements on college courses of their choice. As a result, young people's opportunities for long term success are enhanced as their confidence in their academic abilities is bolstered. This effectively improves self-esteem and feelings of self-worth. An independent reviewing officer stated: 'she passed all of her GCSEs, the highest of any looked after child in the authority. I am very impressed and it is the right place for her'.

Young people enjoy living in a home which is spacious and well equipped to meet their needs. However, some young people's bedrooms are in need of re-decoration. They have been told this will occur and allowed to choose the colours they wish but there has been an unacceptable delay in the work taking place.

Young people feel valued in a home where their unique talents are individually recognised and celebrated. This effectively enables young people to build sustainable attachments with each other and staff. As a result, young people enjoy spending time together and learn positive ways to express their emotions. A staff member said: 'the young people here have the ability to make more of their life. We enable them to have more independence and we enable them to interact with each other and form a bond. We give them a structure as well and can have quite a big effect on their lives in general'. Young people reported that one of the best things about the home was being able to 'make music together'.

Staff report that the appointment of the Registered Manager has made a significant impact on driving forward continuous improvement. They state that as a result of the

manager's guidance the level of communication between the now stable staff team is much better, morale is improved and young people receive consistent messages. This level of motivation ensures young people are provided with a safe, caring and stimulating environment in which to grow and achieve in all aspects of their lives. A young person said, 'I wouldn't want to be anywhere else'.

## 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
34 (2001)	ensure that the system for monitoring matters set out in Schedule 6 provides for consultation with children accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities. (Regulation 34 (3))	01/04/2014

### Recommendations

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

- ensure all people working in the children's home have references verified by telephone to assess their suitability and this information is recorded clearly on file (NMS 16.1)
- ensure that the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well decorated and maintained, in particular, re-decoration of young people's bedrooms. (NMS 10.3)

## 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*.