

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC064412
Inspection date	15/01/2014
Inspector	Emeline Evans
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	14/05/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This privately owned home provides care and accommodation for up to six children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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 **inadequate progress**.

The last full inspection of this children's home was in May 2013 and the overall effectiveness was judged to be adequate with five requirements and eight recommendations for areas identified for further improvement. The judgement at this inspection is inadequate progress as a result of a number of requirements not being fully met.

Since the last inspection, the assistant manager has left the service. One of the directors has recently taken on this role and the management team are still in the early stages of identifying and redeveloping practice and processes. Internal monitoring by the manager is now in operation. However, the reports lack detail and there is little evaluation to be able to form an opinion on the quality of care provided. In addition, these internal checks do not identify trends or patterns and consultation is not fully explored; therefore, shortfalls may not be fully identified. This demonstrates that the internal monitoring systems in place are not fully effective in driving forward improvement within the home. Regulation 33 monitoring visits do not currently take place due to previous information communicated to the home. Therefore, there is no independent oversight and scrutiny of the quality of the care

being delivered at the home. Due to internal monitoring not being effective a requirement in this area has been made.

The Statement of Purpose has been revised and now includes the staff structure but in some cases it still lacks information and clarity. This document does not include: what of forms of control or discipline are used in the home, a clear description of the monitors which are used in the home and what benefits this form of surveillance has on the well-being and safety of young people and in addition details of the qualifications or experience of the staff team. This results in information that is misleading.

The home uses a listening monitor in one of the bedrooms due to historical behaviours displayed by the young people. However, it was not evident if the monitor is more restrictive than necessary and if regard for the young person's need for privacy is taken into account. In addition, the home has still to seek consent from the placing authority on the use of these measures. This use of surveillance is also not clearly detailed in the young person's placement plans. Current practice involves staff 'checking' young people every hour during the night. This is a standard procedure for all young people residing in the home. However, this practice does not take into account the young people's individual identity and therefore young people are treated as a member of the group and not as an individual.

The homes recruitment procedure was previously highlighted as an area of weakness. The management team confirmed that all the necessary recruitment checks are completed before a member of staff starts work. Gaps in employment have now been fully explored on staff member's files.

Since the last inspection, staff have been booked to attend training courses to enhance their work with the young people. There is now a programme of training in place. This includes training on autism, risk management and infection control. A matrix is in operation to evidence when staff have completed training. Staff have recently undertaken training in the use of physical restraint techniques, this ensures consistency in managing any difficult behaviours. Staff who have been with the company for longer than six months are not yet working towards the Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma. Therefore, this recommendation is restated. It was unclear if an annual appraisal system has been introduced for all staff. There was no evidence to indicate appraisals have taken place, therefore this recommendation is also repeated. Staff routinely receive formal supervision. This allows them regular opportunities to reflect on their practice, discuss the needs of young people in their care and receive appropriate management support.

The home has previously consulted with the local fire and rescue service and their fire service contractor, to ensure adequate precautions are taken against the risk of fire. The local fire and rescue service had accepted the proposed arrangements. The home has further improved the means of escape to ensure young people and staff are fully protected in the event of fire. However, the current evacuation plan does not take into account that one fire door is locked. Therefore, this document continues to be in need of review.

Since the last inspection, the home has reviewed the behaviour management policy in operation. This now includes all measures of control, restraint and discipline currently used in the home and how positive behaviour is promoted. However, consequences have been used since the last inspection and there are no records of these measures of control. This does not enable the effectiveness of these measures to be fully explored.

Policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding are readily available to staff. The current policy has been revised and details are given as to who the 'child protection officer' is and who should be contacted should this person not be available. However, the person named to be contacted should there be allegation or suspicion against the child protection officer is a relative of the child protection officer. Therefore, this policy requires additional external contact details, to enable staff to be fully aware of who they can contact.

Young people receive adequate care and encouragement they need to develop independence skills. Staff report that young people are developing in this area. However, the progress young people have made and the skills young people could further develop are still not documented. This does not enable staff to fully ensure young people are equipped with the necessary skills in preparation for successful transitions in to adult placements.

A recommendation was made on the previous inspection in relation to the need to provide a homely environment that is well maintained and decorated. Some maintenance was needed in the bathrooms. There has been some investment in the home to ensure maintenance is carried out and this has resulted in young people feeling it is more homely.

Young people have a good relationship with the care staff and they respond well to the praise and encouragement received. Staff set clear boundaries and young people know what is expected of them. As a result, young people continue to receive structured care.

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)	update the Statement of Purpose to ensure that it includes all of the required information (Regulation 4(1), Schedule 1)	03/03/2014
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written	14/02/2014

	record in made in a volume kept for that purpose which includes all information as required by regulations (Regulation 17B (3)(a-i))	
33 (2001)	appoint an individual to visit the home in accordance with the regulation and ensure a copy of the written report on the conduct of the home is supplied to HMCI and to the Registered Manager of the children's home (Regulation 33(1)(3)(4)(a-c) (5)(a)(b))	03/03/2014
22 (2001)	obtain consent from the children's placing authorities regarding the use of electronic monitoring devices and ensure that this information is provided in the children's placement plans. Ensure the measure is no more restrictive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy (Regulation 22 (1) (a) (b) (d))	14/02/2014
34 (2001)	implement an effective system to monitor the matters set out in Schedule 6 to improve the quality of care provided; ensure this system provides for consultation with children, their parents and placing authorities and that any report made under this regulation is supplied to Ofsted. (Regulation 34 (1)(a)(b)(2) and (3))	03/03/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure children receive personalised care that promotes all aspects of there individual identity and are treated as an individual rather than a member of a group (NMS 2.1)
- review the safeguarding policy to ensure it clearly outlines the procedure staff should follow in the event of an allegation or disclosure. With particular reference to ensuring external contact details are included (Children Act 1989 Statutory guidance Volume 5, 2.68)
- ensure there is an emergency escape plan that all staff and children are familiar with, with particular reference to ensuring this is up-to-date (NMS 10.9)
- ensure the home has clear programmes for promoting the children's independence which prepares them for and supports them into adulthood (NMS 12)
- ensure existing care staff are working towards the Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma (NMS 18.5)
- ensure all staff have their performance individually and formally appraised at least annually and this appraisal takes into account any views of children the service is providing for. (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*.