

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC007284
Inspection date	03/02/2014
Inspector	Tola Akinde-Hummel
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	23/07/2013
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2014

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

This privately run home accommodates six young people. The home offers 24-hour care for young people with emotional or 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 **good progress**.

The full inspection was completed in July 2013. This was judged as an outstanding service. One recommendation for improvement was made as a result of the inspection.

The written procedures for dealing with complaints have been updated. The correct contact details of the regulator are now available should young people and parent/carers wish to communicate issues outside of the home.

The home continues to create a secure and consistent environment for young people. Since the previous inspection four young people have remained in the home and two others have joined them on a more permanent basis. The length of stay in the home presently ranges from five years to five weeks. Young people who have recently moved in describe their introduction as warm and welcoming. One young person said, 'When I first came, they made me feel welcome, explained what they do and over a couple of days introduced me to all the staff. This was a big help.'

Young people have made significant improvements whilst living in the home. All young people attend and are engaged in education. All have aspirations to succeed

at school or college and pursue their chosen careers. Young people are assisted by staff to identify what paths they need to take to achieve this. Young people get on well together and support the new young people to fit into the home and find their way around the local area.

All staff have recently received refresher and full training in behaviour management and physical intervention. The home manages tension between the young people well, using residents meetings and one to one sessions to address the conflicts between them. On occasions where the police have been involved; young people have recognised the seriousness of the situation and the impact this could have on the opportunity for them to continue to live there. Through staff mediation, young people have been mature enough to acknowledge and apologise to each other for their behaviour. One young person said, 'We argue a bit here but it all gets sorted.' Another young person said, 'The staff have helped me to control my behaviour. I am a lot calmer now.' Young people are unanimous in stating that they get on with all other young people living in the home.

All young people have individualised and detailed risk assessments. Generic risk assessments of the home are in place. Staff are keenly aware of the potential risks to young people that are present in their community. Work with community police and the young people themselves seek to manage these risks. While the home knows and responds well the risks; these are not part of a generic assessment. The proprietor and management team recognise that a holistic approach to identifying and minimising the risk would be of value to them and the young people living there.

Good relationships with multi- agency professionals enable joined up working to take place in the best interests of young people. Where appropriate; staff attend and contribute effectively to strategy and multi-disciplinary meetings. The staff team communicate effectively with the network about young people. One professional said, ' They carry out joint assessments and respond straight away to requests. They have positive attachments to young people and are very supportive.' The strong relationships staff have with young people enable them to help nurture relationships between young people and other professionals.

Notifications are forwarded to Ofsted and give excellent information about incidents and support provided to young people experiencing difficulties. Delays in receiving notifications as a result of the computer systems are being addressed. New computers are being installed to ensure the flow of information is timely. Tracking of recent notifications from the home confirm that their responses to the issues and the work undertaken with other professionals is of a high standard. One social care professional said, 'I have always had a really good experience with staff in the home. They are very positive and professional and are very clear and supportive to the young people.' A Police officer added, 'the environment is supportive and staff are prepared to take risks to prevent young people from harm.'

The atmosphere in the home is very positive. Young people are able to talk freely to staff. The exchange is caring and open while remaining professional. Young people feel respected and for the most part return the respect even when they have to

address difficult issues. Staff talk to young people about appropriate behaviour and set boundaries. Records of sanctions and restraints are minimal and demonstrate that reasoning is used in all instances to gain compliance and a deeper understanding from young people about the impact of their behaviour. Young people's interactions with the inspector were informative, engaging and mature.

Activities and relationships within the home have the effect of reducing the incidences of young people going missing and absent without permission. Young people tend to tell staff where they are going and advise them of when they return. Young people know that staff care about them and need to know their whereabouts.

The home has not received any complaints since the previous inspection. Young people know who they can go to if they are not happy and all state they would speak to staff, the manager and the owner in the first instance. One young person said, 'The staff have helped me loads. I am going to school, staying out of trouble, they talk to you and help you sort things out.'

Young people develop their independent living and social skills during their time in the home. Thorough assessments are made of young people's abilities in a variety of key areas such as communication, money management and personal hygiene. The skills required are discussed with young people and targets agreed. Young people have an incentive and reward programme designed to help them achieve particular goals. Key work and one to one sessions held weekly enable young people to review their progress and areas of difficulty. The sessions are signed by young people as an accurate record of their discussions.

Young people continue to enjoy activities within the home and in the community, young people enjoyed the holiday in the summer and the Christmas celebrations. Young people participated in decorating the home and making the occasion special. Young people relaxed over the festive season with staff, enjoyed their presents and the activities arranged during this period.

Young people identify their leisure interests in areas such as sports and music. They have been encouraged by staff to pursue this. The young people's notice board has up to date information about different activities and clubs available in the local area. This provides an opportunity for young people to expand their interests and discover new ones.

The home provides a comfortable environment for young people to enjoy. The home has been through a period of refurbishment that is reaching its conclusion. A new kitchen has been fitted and carpets in the hall and landings have been replaced. A new building is being erected in the garden to accommodate laundry equipment to increase young people's independent skills. Young people enjoy two lounges and their own personalised bedrooms. They have access to board and electronic games that they play with each other and with staff.

The home continues to provide a high quality service to young people and work effectively with professionals involved in their care.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that risk assessments of the whole children's home environment are carried out, to identify any potential sources of harm to the children and are recorded in writing and regularly reviewed. This is with specific reference to risks the home has identified in the community, within close proximity of the home. (NMS 10.8).

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*.