

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	26/02/2014
Inspector	Julian Parker
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	19/06/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This is a small group home operated by a local authority. The home provides care and accommodation for two children who have emotional and/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**.

This home is currently judged as adequate. This interim inspection judges it to be making good progress. Action has been taken to address all of the six requirements made by the last full inspection.

The last inspection identified that to a large extent these issues are administrative and only have an indirect effect on the care of children. The registered manager and staff team have improved management recording practice to address previous shortfalls in the content and clarity of the statement of purpose in areas relating to electronic surveillance and complaint procedures. The recording of risk assessments, fire drills and staff rosters have improved. The recording format currently used is being further amended to more accurately reflect current practice in the home. Although management monitoring takes place regularly the evaluation of practice and submission of a six monthly synopsis to Ofsted has yet to be instigated.

All parts of the children's home used by children are comfortably furnished and equipped. A good standard of decoration and furnishing throughout the home and a

notable absence of any damage provides young people with a good standard of accommodation in an area enabling easy access to the city's cultural and recreational facilities. A revised maintenance recording and tracking system enables staff to proactively address any environmental shortfalls both inside and outside of the home. This attention to detail and care for the property ensures that the home does not stand out in any way from its community neighbours.

Significant improvements to the home's acceptance by the local community have been brought about by the combined effort of staff and young people to be neighbourly and respond proactively and sensitively to community perceptions about children's homes. The home has become established and accepted in its immediate neighbourhood because of the approachable stance taken by the manager and staff promoting the homes positive attributes. As a result no further complaints have emerged.

Careful planning and effective consultation has resulted in the good matching of new admissions to the home. The quality of the care provided for the recently arrived and existing young people in placement demonstrates steady progress as a result of the concerted efforts of the staff team in developing and maintaining meaningful and trusting relationships with young people. The young people feel safe and cared for and this is reflected in their constructive behaviour.

Explicit behaviour management plans, understood by young people and strengthened by consistent staff practice has resulted in periods of stability and measurably improved outcomes. For example in reduced levels of misbehaviour and improved school attendance. Any incidents are effectively dealt with by staff following safeguarding and behaviour management procedures and carefully reviewing young people's risk assessments to reflect any change. This process effectively contributes to minimising risks and promoting safety.

Staff encouragement and practical support helps young people to re-engage with school and maintain their education placements. Improved attendance and attainable goals assist young people to achieve set educational targets reflecting their ability and educational needs. Staff support and celebrate behavioural and school based achievement which effectively helps promote confidence and attendance. Young people also receive help to begin the process of preparing for independence when appropriate.

Regular, supported contact enables young people and families to retain healthy relationships in accord with the placing authority care plan.

Interactions between the registered manager, staff and young people remain positive, which supports the further development of child centred practice in the home. The small staff team are motivated and fully committed to improving the experience and quality of care for young people. Staff meet the individual needs of the currently placed young people very well.

There has been one notifiable incident (not directly relating to the home) since the

last inspection that has resulted in the suspension of a member of staff. The processing of this notification reveals shortfalls in the effectiveness of the home and authorities' systems for communicating with the regulator in an auditable and timely manner. By not receiving this detail within the prescribed timescales it has not been possible for Ofsted to fully assess the effectiveness of the providers safeguarding response. This has had no impact on the young people in placement.

Monitoring records, including monthly regulation 33 reports confirm that the home receives regular visits by independent persons appointed by the Authority. Copies of the reports generated by these visits are sent to Ofsted. Internal management monitoring of the home is well developed and provides an accurate perspective of the homes on-going operation. This process helps the manager identify areas for immediate and on-going improvement. The monthly schedule 6 monitoring has yet to be summarised into an evaluative regulation 34 report which is provided to HMCI within the Ofsted Guidance prescribed timescales.

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
30 (2001)	The registered person shall without delay notify the persons indicated in the event of any of the events listed in column 1 of the table Regulation 30(1)	14/04/2014

Recommendations

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

- improve the content of fire drill recording detail to confirm that the detail set out in in the schedule is fully covered (Schedule 4 (6))
- ensure that a regulation 34 report is made available to HMCI within Ofsted Guidance prescribed timescales. NMS 21.9

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*.