

Inspection report for children's home

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

Date of last inspection	31/10/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is run by a local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to seven young people who have experienced 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 **satisfactory progress**.

At the last inspection in October 2013, the overall effectiveness of this home was judged to be good. Since that inspection, the home has made satisfactory progress overall.

One recommendation was made at the previous inspection. This related to young people's anti-social behaviour outside the home. Although some progress has been made in relation to this, the recommendation is not fully met. Since the last inspection, the behaviour of some young people has improved and incidents of anti-social behaviour in the community have reduced overall. However, other young people have continued to struggle to manage their behaviour. This has resulted in some assaults on staff and damage to the home. Care staff continue to address these issues with young people, working closely with agencies outside the home, such as the police and the youth offending team.

Although the behaviour of some young people has at times been challenging, care staff report that their relationships with young people have remained good overall.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of young people's needs and they work hard to engage with them. A number of young people were present during the inspection and they were observed to interact very positively with staff. Young people themselves report that they 'get on' with staff and that staff are 'helpful'.

Young people have continued to make progress in many areas of their lives. They are cared for safely and they do not go missing. This is a significant improvement for those young people who had had a history of going missing before they came to live in the home. Some young people have increased the level of contact they have with relatives and as a result their relationships with families have improved. All young people have an identified education placement and their attendance is generally good. This has enabled them to make progress and to achieve. Some young people are due to take examinations in the summer term and have plans in place for college. Young people are developing life skills in preparation for independence. All young people who are 'eligible' have a pathway plan in place. Young people confirmed that they are regularly consulted about their care and life in the home and they contribute to their plans and reviews. This ensures that they are involved in all the decisions that are made about their care. Young people report that they feel they are listened to and that their views are taken account of. This supports their relationships with staff and helps to develop their sense of self-esteem.

Young people benefit from living in a homely environment. Overall, the home is maintained to a good standard. At the time of the inspection, some damage was noted to windows in one part of the home. There were plans in place for this damage to be repaired.

Care staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the young people they look after. They are competent and work well together to provide consistent care to young people. They report that they feel they are well supported in their work.

The home continues to be managed effectively. The manager regularly monitors the quality of care in the home and has a good oversight of the progress young people make. He regularly consults with young people, staff and professionals outside the home. The views of relatives are also routinely sought. The feedback that is gained as a result of this consultation is used to inform future improvements in the home.

Two recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection. These relate to young people's behaviour and the maintenance of the home.

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 young people take responsibility for their own behaviour (NMS 3.6)

- ensure that all damage caused to the home is repaired promptly. (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*.