

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	25/02/2014
Inspector	Jacqueline Malcolm
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

The home is run by a private company and provides care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and 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**.

This interim inspection has focused on the progress made by the home since the last inspection in October 2013. The overall judgement was good with an adequate judgement in leadership and management. Three requirements and one recommendation for improvement made at the time related to: proper and safe staff boundaries and professional conduct with young people in the home, notifications to Ofsted, records in relation to measures of control and management oversight. The home has made satisfactory progress due to the improvements they have made to address the majority of the shortfalls raised. Where these have not been fully met, they have been repeated to raise standards in the home.

Young people's privacy and dignity is respected. This follows the action taken by the provider to address a staff conduct issue that was being dealt with at the time of the last inspection. Notifications are now sent to Ofsted as required. This enables the regulator to monitor and respond to any safeguarding matters. However, not all of the written records in relation to measures of control include the date, time, location and effectiveness. Although there is no known negative impact on the safety and welfare of young people, the requirement is repeated to improve practice.

Management monitoring identifies and addresses most weaknesses, but it has not recognised the shortfalls with respect to the aforementioned measure of control documents. Also, there is unclear detail in a risk assessment and a care plan has not been promptly updated. This does not provide a robust written reference to help staff to continue to meet young people's changing needs. This recommendation is therefore repeated.

Since the last inspection, notifications of serious incidents received by Ofsted have raised concerns about the safety and welfare of some young people. This specifically relates to risky behaviours presented by some young people. The home's internal review of incidents and provider led investigations, instigated by Ofsted has shown some inconsistent and reactive staff practices when incidents have occurred. This indicates that the provider has not proactively addressed the incidents with sufficient rigour to avoid possible risks. This is despite the lessons learned. However, positive recent developments to address the issues, although not fully embedded is starting to make a difference in the home. This is underpinned by stronger leadership and management, consistency in the way that staff are deployed in the home, targeted recruitment and good multi-agency and stakeholder collaborations. This has the potential to progressively improve all young people's sense of stability and their welfare over time.

Most young people benefit from strong, positive relationships with staff and their good behaviour is praised and rewarded. Young people say that they feel well cared for and safe at the home. Typical comments include, 'I like it here' and 'they look out for us' and 'I like the staff, there are no nasty staff'. A parent said, 'If x wasn't here x would be dead. This is the only place where x has been looked after and where staff understand x needs'.

Young people enjoy a healthy lifestyle. They have prompt access to primary and specialist health care services, which ensures their holistic health care needs are well met. Young people are involved in meal planning and they contribute to the weekly shopping trips with staff. This helps young people to develop budgeting skills, prepare and cook meals. This promotes young people's independence and keeps them involved in daily life at the home.

Young people's progress with respect to their educational attendance and attainment is promoted by the home. For some young people, their attendance is dependent on their emotional well-being and willingness to attend school. The home continues to actively liaise with education providers to quickly re-engage young people into school and their routines. This provides all young people with opportunities to improve their life chances over time through learning and socialising with their peers in the school community.

Staff training and development opportunities enhances the teams understanding of young people's needs. They have attended training that focuses on issues, such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), behaviour management, mental health and medication. Not all staff have received self-harm training, but plans are in place to deliver this training when the dates are confirmed. Additional support

mechanisms, such as daily changeovers, staff supervision and reflective practice equip the staff team with the skills and knowledge necessary for them to competently care for young people at the home.

The Registered Manager has been well supported over recent months by their senior management. He has challenged some poor practice in the home and leads the staff team by example. The Registered Manager is due to step down from his role, but for consistency they have expressed an interest to be recruited into a senior position at the home. A newly appointed manager is now in post, who has expressed an interest to apply to become the homes Registered Manager. They are known to the young people, which ensures that the changes will cause minimal disruption to their lives.

One additional good practice recommendation is raised as a result of this inspection.

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
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose which shall include the matters listed from (a) to (i) of this regulation (Regulation 17B(3))	30/05/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure the registered person takes action to address any issues of concern that they identify or which is raised with them; specifically ensure clear and detailed risk assessments and up to date placement plans for all young people (NMS 21.9)
- ensure that all staff are equipped with the skills required to meet the individual needs of all children; specifically in relation to self-harm training (18.1)

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*.