

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC436826
<b>Inspector</b>	Anne Bannister
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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<b>Registered manager</b>	POST VACANT / Rachel Margaret Arts
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	06/02/2014

<b>Inspection date</b>	29/05/2014
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Previous inspection	inadequate progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>good</b>
Outcomes for children and young people	adequate
Quality of care	adequate
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

## Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	<b>good</b>
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At the previous inspection the home was judged to be making inadequate progress. However, since this time young people currently living in the home are making significant progress in relation to their starting points at the beginning of their placement. Young people enjoy positive relationships with staff and for some there is a significant reduction in the risk-taking behaviour documented prior to their admission to the home. However, for other young people placement stability has not been as successfully achieved or sustained. This has resulted in placement disruption and young people moving on earlier than planned. The provider has rectified and strengthened their admission process which means that young people are now being appropriately placed at the home.

Young people are re-engaged in education following significant periods of school refusal in previous placements. Placing authorities indicate young people's self-esteem and self-confidence have significantly improved. Young people receive individualised care and support that addresses the wide range of their needs, enabling them to feel safe and appropriately secure in their environment. However, there is limited evidence that the development of placement plans is done fully in consultation with the placing authority.

The home has developed strong links with external agencies and works

collaboratively with professionals and families to safeguard young people. All report positively about communication with the home. One provided an example of good practice which they believe demonstrates 'excellent partnership working to ensure we are all working together to safeguard children'.

There is one requirement and three recommendations from this inspection. Identified areas for further development relate to: developing placement plans in consultation with local authorities; the newly appointed manager to undertake safe recruitment training; implementing a system of annual appraisals for staff and provide specific training for staff. These deficits have not impacted directly on outcomes for young people.

The manager has fully addressed the requirements and recommendations from the previous interim inspection in February 2014 which led to an inadequate progress judgement. This inspection finds that the home is effectively meeting the needs of young people and they are making sound progress. As a result the overall effectiveness is judged as good.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This privately-owned children's home is registered to accommodate and care for four young people. Young people accommodated experience emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home accepts emergency placements and can offer care to young people on a short, medium or long-term basis.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/02/2014	Interim	inadequate progress
23/05/2013	Full	adequate
22/01/2013	Interim	good progress
11/06/2012	Full	adequate

### What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

### 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
12A (2001)	ensure there is co-operation with the child's placing authority in agreeing and signing the plan for the child's placement. Specifically this is in relation to compiling a placement plan, signed by all relevant parties that demonstrates the home and placing authority are working together (Regulation 12A (1)).	04/07/2014

### Recommendations

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

- all personnel responsible for recruitment and selection of staff are trained in, understand and operate safer recruitment practices. Specifically this relates to relation to the newly appointed registered manager attending safer recruitment training (NMS 16.2)
- staff are equipped with the skills required to meet the needs of the children. Specifically this is in relation to a new and recently identified training need (N 18.2)
- 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).

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for children and young people **adequate**

Young people share positive relationships with staff who show them appropriate concern. As a result they feel cared for and understand that staff are there to help and support them. Feedback from one professional indicates staff helped a young person 'know how to present himself, treat people properly and maintain relationships with others'. However, since the last inspection the negative impact of the previous admission process has resulted in unplanned endings for some young people. This has contributed to an adequate outcome judgement.

Young people currently living in the home are benefitting from clear assessment of and attention to their health care needs. This ensures positive promotion of their health and well-being. One young person said 'The staff team are patient with us, and always remain positive even in challenging situations.'

Young people's inclusion in community life is promoted by their participation in a number of enjoyable leisure activities that are supported by the home. For example young people regularly meet up with friends, have been on a trip to London, visited a football stadium, gone out for afternoon tea and visited local places of interest. This provides opportunities for them to experience and develop new skills and is enhancing their self-esteem and self-confidence.

Young people are supported to maintain and develop contact with a range of family members and friends. As a result, young people enjoy constructive relationships with those that are most important to them and understand that they have a continuing role in their life. They are supported to have a sense of their personal identity and a feeling of belonging.

Young people learn independence skills appropriate to their age and development. 'Come dine with me' evenings encourage budgeting and cooking skills. They receive an appropriate foundation from which they can develop their skills and prepare for independence.

The appointment of an education advisor has positively impacted on outcomes for young people. A social worker said; 'the hard work that has gone into getting the young person into college has had a hugely beneficial impact and her attendance is impressive'. Young people realise their future employment prospects will improve considerably if they achieve good examination results. This is a tremendous achievement when considering their initial starting points.

The home is proactive in encouraging and supporting contact with family members consistent with young people's care planning. This ensures that young people are able to maintain and develop their relationships with those that are important to

them.

## **Quality of care**

## **adequate**

There is a dedicated staff team providing young people with stability and a consistency of care.

Placement plans are sensitive to the individual needs of young people. Some information contained in the plans is written by the young people, giving them input into progress and planning. There is a lack of evidence that placement plans are implemented and reviewed in partnership with the placing authority; placement plans are not signed and dated by all parties. Young people are not fully involved in transition planning and as a result some young people are uncertain about their arrangements for moving on.

Monthly progress reports are completed and shared with placing authorities and families. The reports are factual rather than evaluative and do not clearly identify patterns and outcomes.

Care staff have developed skills to work effectively in partnership with other agencies ensuring young people receive specialist support and guidance to address their individual health needs. Advice is acted upon to promote and safeguard young people's physical and emotional well-being. For example, the manager is currently sourcing a bespoke training course to respond to the specific need of one young person. One professional said: 'There have been some difficulties, but I feel the staff act appropriately and seek advice as well as keep the child safe and well managed'. The home promotes good arrangements for the storage, administration and monitoring of medication. As a result this aspect of young people's care is well managed.

Young people's education is an area that is well supported. One professional said; 'Education appears to be a high priority for (name). Having an education officer has helped make the transition into college for the student work well and has also provided a strong and effective link between the home and college'. Young people are encouraged to develop skills tailored to their particular interests. This benefitted one young person who accessed a vocational training course.

Consultation and on-going communication is integral to constructive relationships between staff and young people. Staff are good advocates for young people. For example young people are supported to challenge decisions made by other professionals. Regular meetings are held and young people influence certain aspects of the running of the home. For example, young people are involved in the interview process when new members of staff are recruited to the home. A young person is

currently involved in the process of reviewing the young people's guide to give it a modern twist, ensuring it appeals to children and young people of different ages.

The home has undergone significant refurbishment and redecoration and is well maintained. There is a pleasant atmosphere and the house has a homely feel. Soft furnishings and pictures are of an excellent quality. Photographs and mementos on display reflect young people's positive experiences. Young people are now happy to bring friends back to the home.

### **Keeping children and young people safe    good**

Young people say they feel safe. They say they can talk to adults about their worries. One young person whose placement recently ended said 'Staff were very caring and I always felt I could talk to someone about my problems'. Another young person said 'the staff give children a lot of support, they are very patient with us and always remain positive even in challenging situations'.

Individual risk assessments, together with behaviour management strategies promote young people's safety and welfare. The home works in consultation with young people about behaviour management strategies and consequences. Regular consultation with other professionals ensures strategies are reviewed and updated in line with risks and young people's progress. Young people receive praise and reward for positive behaviour. Young people are supported to work through problems and challenges. Keyworker sessions help young people to understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others. Young people are informed why particular rules and boundaries are in place. They may not always agree but understand adults care and want to keep them safe.

Appropriate information about the complaints procedure is available to young people, who understand how they can make a complaint if they wish to do so. The complaints procedure is well managed and young people speak positively about the way staff respond to any issues which concern them.

Staff receive regular training to inform and update their knowledge so that they have a good understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures and know what action to take when the need arises. Prompt action is now taken to safeguard young people. As a result young people living in the home are safe and feel safe.

There are appropriate procedures in place for the recruitment and selection of staff. The new manager has yet to complete safer recruitment training. However, she has been supported by a senior manager to ensure safer recruitment practice has been followed. Adults safe and competent to work in the home have been recruited as a result.

The home has revised its admissions process and has developed a robust matching



procedure. This has had a positive impact and the home is more settled as a result. The police liaison officer confirms the number of call outs to the home and of young people missing from care has reduced significantly. All the necessary information about young people, along with the appropriate procedures, is in place should anyone go missing.

Health and safety checks are regularly undertaken ensuring that young people and staff live in a physically safe and secure environment. Young people are supported to understand what to do in the event of a fire in the home and participate with staff in regular fire evacuation drills. This means young people are well prepared in the event of such an emergency.

## **Leadership and management**

**good**

The Statement of Purpose has recently been updated and now reflects the aims and ethos of the home. A young people's guide ensures that young people have sufficient information and knowledge about the home and how it operates.

At the end of the inspection a fit person interview took place to assess the suitability of the new manager to become the Registered Manager of the home. The outcome of the interview is that a recommendation to register the manager has been forwarded to senior managers in Ofsted for a decision. Since her appointment in January 2014 she has demonstrated a commitment to the continuous improvement of the service and has been successful in sharing her vision with the staff team. The whole staff team are committed to providing young people with an experience of care that promotes their physical and emotional wellbeing and enables them to achieve their full potential.

An assessment has been made of the home's strengths and weaknesses and a development plan has been put in place which demonstrates a commitment to the provision of continually improving outcomes for young people.

The manager currently in post is not responsible for decisions relating to inappropriate matching of young people previously admitted to the home. She has taken responsibility for securing more appropriate placements for young people who have moved on.

Staff confirm they feel well supported by their management team. New staff are positive about their induction and feel supported by the management and other staff members. Staff now have access to a range of training that is reflective of the young people's needs. Regular formal planned staff supervision takes place, ensuring staff are provided with the support and training to enable them to meet the needs of young people in the home. This demonstrates that staff are properly managed, supported and clear about their roles and responsibilities. One social worker said; 'as a team they have helped young people feel safe, the ups and downs experienced are indicative of them feeling safe enough to share their feelings and emotions'.

However, an annual appraisal scheme is yet to be implemented to ensure staff have and maintain the skills necessary to look after the young people in their care.

There are systems in place to monitor the performance of the home. Monthly audits of the service are undertaken by the manager and by an independent person appointed by the company to monitor the quality of care. This process takes account of the views young people, placing authorities and families. These ensure a robust review of the home's practice relating to the quality of young people's care. This enables the manager to tackle identified areas for development effectively.

The home has appropriate systems in place to notify Ofsted and other relevant bodies of significant events that occur within the home or with young people. This ensures that those with an interest in the young people's welfare are kept appropriately informed of such events.

The manager has fully addressed the requirements and recommendations of the previous inspection. These related to the assessment of the suitability of prospective new admissions and the risk assessment of their likely impact on the existing resident group. There have been no new admissions since the last inspection but documents demonstrate why referrals for some young people have been deemed inappropriate. These improved practices promote the safety and welfare of all young people.

## What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

## Information 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 main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.