

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC436826
Inspector	Anne Bannister
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered manager	Rachel Margaret Arts
Date of last inspection	29/05/2014

Inspection date	25/11/2014
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

At the last full inspection in May 2014, the overall effectiveness of the home was judged to be good. At this time Ofsted asked the provider to address one requirement and suggested improvements in an additional three areas. The issues identified have been addressed by the home.

Young people's care plans have been revised with targets set in all outcome areas. The plans are now signed by all relevant parties, including young people, parents and other key professionals. This is to demonstrate effective working relationships with agreed shared aims, targets and outcomes for young people.

The Registered Manager completed safe recruitment training prior to undertaking a recent recruitment drive. An appraisal scheme is being introduced to ensure all staff have their performance individually and formally appraised at least annually. Questionnaires are being sent to all young people at the beginning of December to take account of their views on staff performance. These will feed into formal individual staff appraisal interviews in January 2015.

The assessment of suitability for a young person's placement in the home now includes comment as to whether the staff team is equipped with the skills necessary to meet their assessed needs. This ensures that only appropriate placements are made to the home.

Staff are committed to young people, which is evident in the warm and positive relationships they have forged with them. Young people's individual differences are valued, and as a result their self-esteem and self-confidence develops whilst living at the home.

Young people's transitions into and out of the home are sensitively planned and

managed. Feedback from placing social workers is positive about the impact even short term placements have had on outcomes for young people.

Young people's educational attainment significantly improves as a result of the strong links the home's education co-ordinator has with education providers. This ensures that any areas of concern are promptly addressed. One young person, who has only recently left the home to move to supported living, achieved GCSE grades and has gone on to study 'A' levels at college. She has recently invited the education co-ordinator to attend an award ceremony where she will receive an award for the learner of the year. This is a tribute to the support she received while in placement, which enabled her to achieve her potential.

There are good systems in place for young people, their parents and partner agencies to share their views so that the home can continually learn and improve standards of care further. Any complaints or concerns are fully explored by the home and appropriate action taken, including safeguarding referrals and notification to Ofsted where necessary. Staff practice demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding procedures and as a result the home are able to appropriately promote and protect the safety and wellbeing of young people in their care. Key staff have received training in supporting young people who self-harm or who are at risk of sexual exploitation. This has been cascaded down throughout the staff team in order to ensure staff have and maintain the skills necessary to safely care for young people in their care.

New staff have recently been recruited and are awaiting completion of satisfactory checks and references. A comprehensive induction programme has been developed to support their integration into the home. Young people have been involved in the recruitment process, ensuring their views influence decisions about the home.

Appropriate systems promote the safety of young people, staff and visitors within the home. There is regular servicing of electrical and fire safety equipment and young people are involved in discussions about fire safety. All young people's files contain a copy of the evacuation plan they received as part of their induction into the home. However, fire drills refer generically to all staff and young people. This practice fails to confirm all individual staff and young people have had the opportunity to practice evacuation of the building in an emergency.

Robust monthly monitoring of the home is undertaken 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. Internal monitoring of the home by the Registered Manager is detailed but is descriptive and lacks a more detailed evaluation of the strengths and areas for further development of the home.

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
29/05/2014	Full	good
06/02/2014	Interim	inadequate progress
23/05/2013	Full	adequate
22/01/2013	Interim	good progress

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

Recommendations

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

- ensure that there is an emergency escape plan that all staff and children are familiar with and have practiced so they know what to do in an emergency. Specifically the initials of staff and yp should be included in the record of fire drills. This is in order that fire warden can ensure all staff and young people are involved in a rolling programme of drills (NMS10.9)
- ensure that that Regulation 34 reports identify trends and issues of concern so that all those involved in running and working in the home can continually improve the quality of care they are providing. Specifically, Regulation 34 reports forwarded to Ofsted every 3 months must be more evaluative(Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations- Volume 5: children's homes).

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

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.