

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC415347
Inspector	Julian Mason
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Young Options College Limited
Registered person address	Turnpike Gate House Alcester Heath Alcester Warwickshire B49 5JG
Responsible individual	Graham Baker
Registered manager	Mark Anthony Duckers
Date of last inspection	02/07/2014

Inspection date	10/02/2015
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Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

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

Some changes to the way in which the home is managed have taken place since the last inspection. The Registered Manager no longer manages two children's homes and is now able to devote his full time attention to this service. This has brought benefits to both the staff team and young people, as the manager provides greater visible leadership, guidance and support on a day-to-day basis. The home's staffing arrangements are also more stable and consistent in providing young people with improved opportunities to grow positive attachments and relationships with their carers.

The last inspection made one requirement and two recommendations, which have all been addressed. The home uses less cover staff because there is a permanent and established residential team. The Registered Manager only admits young people whose assessed needs the home can meet. Staff received the training they need to ensure their skills and knowledge are matched to the individual needs of each young person.

Staff continue to be very alert to the potential risks young people may face in the community, especially for those young people who are vulnerable to exploitation. Young people's safety is the first priority of the staff team; they are clear about their role and responsibilities and what to do if they have a concern. This is because the Registered Manager promotes good safeguarding practices, which are central to the team's work with very vulnerable young people.

Strategies are well deployed to ensure young people's safety and protection is maintained and promoted. For example, robust and consistent monitoring is undertaken for the periods young people are away from the home on agreed family contact and overnight stays. Where concerns emerge, swift communication is made with other agencies involved in the protection of young people. Young people are

frequently engaged in discussions with staff about topics that relate to their personal safety and well-being and state that they feel safe in the home. These arrangements help to keep young people safe and have contributed to reducing the risks previously experienced by them.

There are effective partnerships with stakeholders and external agencies. The development of positive relationships with external professionals and services means that the staff team are well placed to tackle any shortfalls in service provision. This helps to ensure young people receive the right support when needed.

Relationships between staff and young people are constructive and helpful. Any unsafe behaviour is managed in a way that offers different ways of behaving that are more socially acceptable. Staff focus on successes and positive actions to help build young people's confidence when they change or improve their behaviour. The home is good at adapting and modifying plans to take account of individual circumstances and how each young person learns and is motivated to do things differently. The use of physical intervention is minimal and missing from care events are much less now than in previous periods. Detailed monitoring of these circumstances supports the on-going assessment of risk, which helps inform staff of the most effective ways to help young people sustain the progress they make.

Young people are provided with living accommodation that is spacious, clean and tidy. The living environment continues to be improved because of the on-going investment in the interior parts of the home. For example, recent decoration and improvements to communal areas has further enhanced young people's living space and comfort. Overall, the external maintenance of the home is satisfactory although damage to the guttering close to one of the entrances is yet to be repaired.

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for three young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is privately owned.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/07/2014	Full	adequate
03/02/2014	Interim	good progress
27/06/2013	Full	adequate
30/01/2013	Interim	good progress

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
31 (2001)	ensure that all parts of the children's home used by children are kept in good structural repair externally, this is in relation to the guttering by one of the entrances to the home. (Regulation 31(2)(d))	31/03/2015

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.