

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC036740
Inspector	Shaun Common
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Secure Unit

Registered person	Nottinghamshire County Council
Registered person address	Nottinghamshire County Council, County Hall Loughborough Road, West Bridgford NOTTINGHAM NG2 7QP
Responsible individual	Rachel Coombs
Registered manager	Thirza Smith
Date of last inspection	17/06/2014

Inspection date	17/03/2015
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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 inspection two statutory requirements and two recommendations were made. The two recommendations related to the education provision and will be assessed at the next full inspection. The two statutory requirements have been fully addressed. Young people receive a prompt and robust reply to any complaint made and managers ensure that Ofsted are notified in a timely manner of any significant events in line with regulations.

There is a well-established and supportive process for admitting young people to the secure children's home and helping them to settle in. An induction is held with each young person that takes place over the first three days of their stay. This includes the homes routines, expectations and providing general information. This process helps young people to build relationships with staff, understand what the home is like and what to expect. All relevant background information is attained by managers about all young people coming to the home and a robust care or sentence training plan is devised. These documents set out the young person's needs and vulnerabilities. They provide staff with good information on how to care for the young person, meet their needs and how to help keep them safe. Young people placed by the Youth Justice Board engage in programmes to address their offending behaviour. One young person has been involved in the training with staff to deliver a specific offending behaviour programme and has lead sessions with other young people. This is an excellent achievement for this young person promoting their self-esteem, self-worth and confidence.

There are very good processes in place to ensure young people are well prepared for moving on to their next placement and returning to the community. One young person expressed that they were very well prepared and have been well supported. Approved mobility, which are visits to the local community, are used well to support young people in this transition. Mobility is used to develop skills for adulthood and

for young people to attend work/learning placements. Since the last inspection, a vocational building has been completed and is available to those young people that risk assessment deems suitable. This is an excellent resource where young people can develop practical skills, experience and attain qualifications that will support them to attain employment when they move on. The home continues to support young people after they have left. One young person is working in the home's kitchen alongside staff. This is assisting the young person in developing work experience and attaining a qualification. Another young person continues to come back to the home for support with education and examinations. The work the home undertakes and continues to carry out with young people who have left their care is commendable.

There are good relationships between staff and young people. Young people were observed to be relaxed, made positive comments about the home and stated they feel safe. One young person has recently been involved with the media with about their positive experience of being in a secure children's home.

Young people are able to make complaints. There is an informal process where they can write their concerns into a 'grumbles' book. A meeting is held every day with young people and staff check if they have any issues to include in the book. Staff and managers respond to 'grumbles' verbally and in writing to young people so they can see what has been done about their concern. Young people are also able to raise formal complaints. They can place a form into a post box that manager's access daily. Staff support young people with making any complaint where needed. Formal complaints have been made since the last inspection. These are clearly recorded, showing how the matter was investigated and the outcome with any action taken. Young people's complaints are dealt with quickly and they receive a letter telling them what the outcome is. Young people are asked if they are happy with the outcome and if not, they are able and advised how to take the matter to the next stage.

There have been child protection incidents since the last inspection. A number of the matters relate to a time before young people were admitted to the home. Managers and staff have followed the home's policy and ensured all matters have been dealt appropriately in line with procedure. All relevant agencies and professionals have been informed and involved as required.

Incidents of physical intervention have occurred since the last inspection. Every incident is fully recorded and closely monitored by managers. Managers review records and utilise closed-circuit television to ensure practice is appropriate and in line with regulations and guidance. Young people and staff are supported through engaging in debriefs after an incident. Staff are offered support at the end of each shift talking through any incidents with colleagues and senior staff. Debriefs are recorded. However, the records do not sufficiently detail whether all staff members involved have been provided with the opportunity for personal support, rather than just identifying areas for development.

Single separation is sometimes used and where this is the case it is in line with government guidance. Any use is clearly recorded showing the reasons and other relevant and required information. Managers closely monitor practices to ensure they are appropriate.

Managers ensure that records are stored securely in the children's home. Young people's case files are locked away and managers undertake checks to ensure this is the case. However, the home does not have a policy and procedure that sets out who is responsible for ensuring that when office areas are not in use, that all confidential information, including young people's case files are secured. This issue has minimal impact as there is no indication confidential information is unsecured when not in use.

The secure unit has recently become a member of the East Midlands Resettlement Consortium. The aim of the consortium is for managers and staff from secure children's homes, Secure Training Centre's and Young Offender Institutions to attend meetings with other partners to look at support for young people leaving secure estate establishments. The meetings raise and try to address issues and barriers to the resettlement of young people. This work aims to improve links and collaborative working and improve access to services important in supporting young people on their return to the community.

A number of young people have been involved with an arts award at the home. Nineteen young people have participated, enabling them to develop and extend their skills. The young people have achieved bronze and silver levels. This supports their enjoyment and achievement.

Information about this children's home

This secure children's home is operated by a local authority and is approved by the Secretary of State to restrict young people's liberty. Education is provided on site.

The children's home can accommodate up to 18 young people, who are aged up to 17 years. Up to 14 young people who have received a custodial sentence can be placed at this home by the Youth Justice Board. Other young people are the subject of Section 25 of The Children Act 1989 and placed by local authorities. Admission of any young person under section 25 of The Children Act 1989 who is under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/06/2014	Full	good
26/02/2014	Full	good
25/06/2013	Full	good
15/01/2013	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 all staff are properly managed and supported; specifically, formally record personal support provided for staff after any incident of restraint (NMS 19.2)
- ensure there are clear and effective procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the home; specifically, ensure that a policy and procedure is devised and implemented in relation to staff's responsibilities for ensuring children's case records are secured. (NMS 21.1)

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.