

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC007284
Inspector	Jackie Graves
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered manager	St Clair Simmons Muhammad
Date of last inspection	03/02/2014

Inspection date	18/03/2015
------------------------	------------

Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

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

Young people feel safe in the home. One says 'the staff treat you as your own - really safe place with a support network'. At times, this may mean staff work effectively to protect young people from contact with their families. At other times, they may work with families in young people's best interests, for example, to help bring about more frequent visits to family or a return to living with them. No bullying is reported.

Young people are making good progress. Some feel better as a result of living in the home. One says it is a 'calming place'. Some feel less angry. For a few, there is a reduction in self-harming incidents. Those in school attend regularly so they can make the most of their educational opportunities. Some schools find improved behaviour also in their settings. Young people experience new things, for example, going to see shows in London with staff. But they also enjoy the routine things in the home such as birthday celebrations, cooking meals and playing games.

Young people stay attached to the home. Most who move on do keep in touch by telephone or return to visit the staff. Staff provide 'over and above' support to those who have left the home, for example, taking them out for meals and a chat, helping them with employment and providing practical support.

Staff are very child-focused. They have a clear vision about the home's ethos. The Registered Manager ensures that new staff are not brought in to work with the young people until they understand what the home is about. Staff are ambitious about helping the young people aim high.

Positive behaviour management benefits young people. Staff work hard to understand young people's behaviour so they can support them. They try to 'ignore' some behaviour and focus on moving them forward. A young person thinks 'the staff

are good at setting boundaries'. They say the staff 'get boundaries right - they don't ignore but they don't overact either'. This helps young people feel safe and secure. They are then in a better position to reflect on their lives, make plans and progress. Use of restraint is low, with only two, low-level restraints since the last inspection. Staff focus on helping young people understand the feelings behind any behaviour and to reflect on any incidents.

The staff work effectively with the police and local authority when young people do not return to the home when expected. However, some recording around unauthorised absences and missing episodes is not entirely clear, for example, about how long the young person has been away. Staff offer young people the opportunity to speak with an independent person when they return, but they are not always willing to speak to them. However, this is not always recorded. Young people's descriptions are shared with the police, but these would benefit from further description of the young person and associated risks to assist in the search.

The premises are maintained in good condition. The house is clean, tidy and suits young people's needs. Young people like their rooms and personalise these with their own artwork and pictures. A new carpet is provided in the hallway and stairs since the last inspection, which improves the appearance of the home. The garden is due to be improved in the Spring. Dangerous substances are safely locked away. However, as the padlocked cupboards are in the dining room, this may detract from the homely appearance of the rest of this room.

The Registered Manager has met the three recommendations made at the last inspection. Reports of the independent person's monitoring of the home are now shared with Ofsted in a timely manner, so the regulator is kept informed of what goes on. Records of staff supervision and appraisal show these are conducted at the recommended frequency and recorded appropriately. These actions indicate the home's capacity for improvement. Young people find there is nothing to improve in the home.

Information about this children's home

This privately run home accommodates six young people. The home offers care to young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/02/2014	Interim	good progress
23/07/2013	Full	outstanding
21/03/2013	Interim	good progress
14/11/2012	Full	outstanding

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 the home's procedures are compatible with and have regard to the Runaway and Missing from Home and Care protocols and procedures maintained and managed by the police or the local authority, with specific reference to developing the missing person's descriptions and the expanding the detail in risk assessments. (NMS 5.6)

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.