

Children's homes – Monitoring visit

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| Inspector | Bridget Goddard |

This monitoring visit

The purpose of this visit was to evaluate the progress made by the provider on the predominately safeguarding concerns identified at the full inspection on 17 June 2016. In addition, the home was without a permanent manager and daily care and education were not planned effectively. The overall inspection judgement was inadequate.

The full inspection found that the home was not keeping young people sufficiently safe. Specifically, young people were increasingly going missing and engaging in high-risk behaviours. Staff attempts to reduce this behaviour were ineffective and there was insufficient monitoring of each young person's patterns and trends. Boundary setting in relation to education attendance, daily routines and activities was not consistent.

External agencies were concerned about this picture and the home was beginning to act on this, but the pace of change was too slow. The home had lost two registered managers in the nine months since opening, and had an interim manager at the time of the full inspection for the second time. These events seriously inhibited the management team's capacity to lead the necessary changes.

Statutory requirements were made in relation to the points above and these are detailed below. The progress made in meeting these requirements was assessed at the monitoring visit. In summary, the management team and the staff have made very good progress on addressing these serious concerns.

A new manager and most recently a deputy manager are now in place. The manager has worked closely with her operational managers and has effectively led the progress that has been made.

Young people are now safer than they were. For example, throughout June, one young person had 10 episodes of going missing and in July had no episodes of going missing. In part, this reflects the impact of another young person moving to an alternative placement, but this is not the whole story. Staff have been proactive in restricting young people's access to social media and have established daily routines. In addition, some staff have received further necessary training.

Management monitoring of safeguarding is much improved, and strong links with other agencies are being reformed. Staffing levels are more robust. Not only is there a new management team in place, but there will shortly be two new residential care workers. Work is ongoing in making the electronic restriction of liberty system more effective. However, crucially, the manager and staff are clear that what is most effective in keeping young people safe is the quality of relationships that staff form with young people. The staff group has always been able to form warm and accepting relationships with young people. But, there are now some strong signs that staff are building on these strengths and consistently implementing boundaries.

In summary, the pace of change in this home has been fast and it has had a positive impact on young people. However, the task now is to embed these

improvements into everyday practice. This will be tested at the home's forthcoming inspection when the home's ability to sustain, as well as implement, change will be examined.

Requirements made at the full inspection on 17 June 2016

12: Ensure that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. This relates to staff receiving appropriate safeguarding training and support. (Regulation 12 (2) (a) (i))

12: Ensure that staff take effective action whenever there is serious concern about a child's welfare. This particularly relates to children's use of mobile phones. (Regulation 12 (2) (a) (vi))

12: Ensure that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. This particularly relates to the use of temporary restriction of liberty measures. (Regulation 12 (2) (b))

12: Ensure that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (2) (e))

28: Ensure that the new manager of the home has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills to manage the home effectively and lead the care of children. This particularly relates to experience in safeguarding children at risk of abuse or exploitation. (Regulation 28 (1) (b) (i))

13: Ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide safe care for each child. This particularly relates to night staffing numbers. (Regulation 13 (2) (d))

45: Ensure that an effective system is developed to monitor, review and evaluate missing from care patterns for young people which determines the actions necessary to improve the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (2) (a) (c))

14: Ensure that children receive effectively planned care. This particularly relates to consistently executed boundaries around attendance at education, night time routines and systematically planned activities. (Regulation 14 (1) (a))

5: Seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate, having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. This particularly relates to relationships with the local multi-agency safeguarding panel. (Regulation 5 (d))

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

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