Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	28/02/2013
Inspector	Amanda Ellis
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	16/10/2012

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Service information

Brief description of the service

This private home provides care and accommodation for three young people aged from 10 to 17 years, who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The company also has its own independent school.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Good progress	The children's home has demonstrated continued improvement in quality of care and outcomes for children and young people and where appropriate has addressed all requirements and the large majority of recommendations that were raised at the previous inspection.
Satisfactory progress	The children's home has maintained quality of care and outcomes for children and young people and where appropriate has addressed all requirements and the majority of recommendations that were raised at the previous inspection.
Inadequate progress	The children's home has failed to address one or more requirements and/or has not met the majority of recommendations and/or the quality of care and outcomes for children and young people have declined since the last full inspection.

Progress

Since their previous inspection the service is judged to be making **satisfactory progress**.

At the last inspection in October 2012, the overall effectiveness of the home was judged to be good. There were no requirements or recommendations made at the last inspection.

The home has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The home has maintained standards of care and young people continue to receive care from a dedicated and skilled staff team.

Young people receive individualised care appropriate to their needs to ensure they achieve good outcomes. The service provision includes an integrated care package, from the provider's education, social and therapeutic staff. This means young people receive a holistic approach to their care which is responsive to individual needs. A knowledgeable and skilled staff team support young people with all aspects of their development.

Care planning, risk assessments and behaviour management plans are individualised

and comprehensive. Young people receive care which is responsive to their changing needs. This provides staff with clarity to enable effective support to young people.

Feedback from one stakeholder commented that in meeting one young person's needs, 'They are absolutely fantastic in meeting this young person's complex individual needs.'

Young people live in a safe, secure and stable environment. Levels of safety are good because staff implement the robust and regularly reviewed policies and procedures. Young people are protected if they are absent from the home. The home has good protocols and procedures to follow should young people go missing, which are implemented appropriately. However the recording of these incidents is not consistent, insofar as confusion relating to what constitutes unauthorised absence or missing from care.

The use of physical restraint in the home is minimal. Staff who undertake any restraints are suitably trained. It is used as a last resort when a young person is placing themselves or others at risk. Recording of such incidents is not in line with the legislative framework, with no written record kept in a central volume. This means reduced effectiveness of monitoring such incidents and evaluating safeguarding processes. In addition, young people do not routinely have the opportunity to speak with staff following the use of any restraint and their views recorded on their individual case files. This means young people are not able to express their views on all aspects of their care.

Quality assurance systems are undertaken internally and by external visitors to monitor the care young people receive. However, not all records maintained are clear. This means information may not be easily accessible or contribute to an effective understanding of the day-to-day activities of the home.

Young people live in an environment that is physically safe and appropriately secure. All fire and health and safety requirements are regularly checked and up to date. However, fire drills are not routinely practised or recorded. This means that the manager is not able to evidence that young people and staff practice safe evacuation methods and that evacuations are practised at different times of the day.

This inspection has identified shortfalls in care provision; however there is no direct negative impact upon young people. The home has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The manager and staff are clear about what is necessary to ensure that young people continue to receive high standards of care. There have been two statutory requirements and two recommendations made as a result of this visit.

Areas for improvement

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
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any restraint, a written record is made in a volume kept for that purpose (Regulation 17B(3)(b))	29/04/2013
32 (2001)	ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that the persons working at the home and, so far as practicable, children accommodated there, are aware of the procedure to be followed in the case of fire. (Regulation 32 (1)(e))	29/04/2013

Recommendations

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

- where any sanctions, disciplinary measures or restraint are used, children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records kept by the home (NMS 3.18)
- ensure the home has and implements a written policy that clarifies the purpose, format and content of information to be kept on the registered person's files and information to be kept on the child's files. Records may be kept in electronic form, provided the information so recorded is capable of being reproduced in a legible form. Staff understand the nature of records maintained and follow the home's policy for the keeping and retention of files, managing confidential information, and access to files (including files removed from the premises). There is a system in place to monitor the quality and adequacy of record keeping and take action when needed.(NMS 22.1)

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 progress made by the provider since the last full inspection, identifies any further strengths, any areas for improvement and makes judgements as outlined in the *Inspection of children's homes – framework for inspection*.