

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC000673
Inspection date	25/02/2011
Inspector	Mick Earl
Type of inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	21/09/2010
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2011

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Service information

Brief description of the service

The home, in partnership with the local authority and health trust, provides short-term residential care for children and young people, aged from 6-years-old up to 17-years-old, who have moderate to severe learning disabilities. The premises are purpose built and consist of two linked units.

One unit has six places, including an emergency bed and normally accommodates children aged from six-years-old up to 13-years-old. The other unit has four places and normally accommodates young people aged from 11-years-old up to 17-years-old. There is a range of aids and adaptations within the home. The premises includes a garden and enclosed play area. The home has the use of two adapted mini-buses.

The home is within walking distance of the centre of a market town. It is close to a variety of community resources, that includes a leisure centre, swimming pool, theatre and library.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

This was an unannounced inspection using the key national minimum standards.

The national minimum standards were sampled in all of the outcome areas and organisation and identified that the home has some real strengths. These include supporting young people's education, providing individual support, providing high staffing levels, supporting activities and interests, involving young people and obtaining their views and providing comfortable accommodation.

There are areas for improvement which include making sure formal staff supervision takes place at the right times and that new staff receive fortnightly supervision, and ensuring that staff receive appropriate training including National Vocational Qualification at level 3.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection there was one action made. The service was asked to make sure that there was a current Public and Employee Liability Insurance certificate available. This action has been met.

There were also three recommendations. These were to make sure a copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures are kept in the home, to ensure all

staff complete training in how to prevent bullying and to ensure that one fire drill is held at night. These recommendations have been completed.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The young people living at the home are encouraged to eat a healthy diet and staff promote healthy eating.

Fresh fruit and snacks are available through the day and young people's individual specialist diets are catered for.

Young people's day-to-day healthcare needs remain the responsibility of their parents. Healthcare plans of young people staying at the home are comprehensive. The records of accidents to young people detail the correct information, however, two records did not contain the date of the accident. The involvement of specialist healthcare professionals in relation to specific health care needs is requested where necessary. Young people are given guidance and support in relation to health. This helps them to stay healthy.

Staff have undertaken training in the safe administration of medication and have been assessed to safely administer drugs. Staff have up-to-date first aid certificates. Systems for the safe handling and administration of medication are in place, however, there have been a number of incidents during the last fifteen months when the administration of medication has not been correct. The manager of the home is aware of this and has acted appropriately after each incident. This has included reviewing and changing systems, and additional training for staff.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people's privacy is promoted. Each young person staying at the home has their own bedroom and there are sufficient bathrooms and toilets to meet the needs of the young people. Staff make sure information about young people is handled confidentially and stored securely and there are policies and procedures in place to help ensure this happens.

There are clear procedures for managing complaints appropriately and ensuring young people are listened to. Staff make sure young people are aware of who they can go to if they have any complaints or concerns. The home has received no complaints from young people since the last inspection.

The home has clear procedures for safeguarding young people from abuse. There are suitable arrangements for making sure that staff receive child protection training. This helps staff protect young people from abuse and ensure they respond appropriately to any allegation or suspicion of abuse.

Young people benefit from being looked after by a team of staff who create an atmosphere where bullying is known to be unacceptable. The home has a clear anti-bullying policy and staff have had training in countering bullying behaviour. They try to help young people to develop an understanding and tolerance of people's diverse needs.

Staff take appropriate action when young people go missing or are absent from the home without permission. The high staffing level helps to reduce the chance of young people going missing and there have been no incidents since the last inspection. There are suitable policies and procedures in place and each young person's assessment includes the risk of them going missing without permission.

Staff encourage and support young people to develop and maintain socially acceptable behaviour. They give positive messages to young people to reinforce acceptable behaviour. There are clear procedures and guidance for staff regarding how they should manage the behaviour of young people. Sanctions are used sparingly and there have only been five since the last inspection.

It is concerning that the records show training for all staff in the safe restraint and holding of young people is out of date. This is needed to show that young people are being physically managed in a safe and approved manner.

There are good systems in place to keep young people and adults safe from the risk of fire and other potential hazards. This includes carrying out a range of individual risk assessments, providing information for young people and an annual review of the home's fire safety risk assessment. Staff take part in regular fire training and fire drills and there are appropriate arrangements for carrying out regular checks of equipment such as, fire alarms and electrical appliances.

The home has appropriate procedures in place to help make sure it employs suitable people. This includes carrying out Criminal Records Bureau disclosure checks on new staff before they start work at the home. There are suitable arrangements for monitoring and managing visitors to the home and these help ensure that they do not have inappropriate access to young people.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The progress of each young person living in the home is monitored effectively and they receive individual help and support when they need or request it. Each young person has their own key worker and information on their progress is kept in a care plan. Meetings between key workers and young people take place at regular intervals, and the outcome of these meetings is recorded to ensure essential information and changing needs are identified. The progress of each young person is closely monitored and their care plan amended in line with changing needs and individual progress.

The home provides short break care for children and does not have the main responsibility for supporting the education of children who use the service. The home has good links with schools to help promote the education of the young people and make sure there is a consistent approach and staff support young people to attend school during their stay. Young people are encouraged and supported to develop their own hobbies and leisure interests.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young people living at the home are appropriately placed and each young person has their own placement plan, which outlines what their needs are, and how these will be met. To help ensure that their needs are met the manager and members of staff complete individual risk assessments of each young person and develop detailed in-house care plans to monitor their progress. Staff consult young people and their families about these plans and they are updated regularly.

There are good arrangements for reviewing the care and progress made by young people. These include holding regular statutory reviews and completing monthly reports for young people. Staff support young people to contribute to their statutory reviews.

The home provides a short break service and young people continue to live at home with their parents. Staff maintain regular contact with the young people's families during their stay in order to meet the individual needs of the young people.

There are clear procedures covering how staff should support young people when they move into and out of the home and there are clear systems in place to ensure this is a smooth process. Staff make sure young people feel welcome and know what to expect, and young people are encouraged to bring appropriate personal possessions with them so that they can personalise their rooms during their stay.

Staff are good at talking to and communicating with young people about how the home is run and helping them to make decisions on matters that affect them.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The manager and members of staff work hard to encourage and support young people to take responsibility for their actions and to develop socially acceptable behaviour. Young people are encouraged and supported, within their capabilities, to learn independence skills and activities for daily living. For young people who are old enough, the manager and members of staff work closely with parents and social workers from adult services to support young people in their transition from children's to adult services.

The home is fully adapted and equipped to meet the needs of young people with a disability. The home is decorated, furnished and maintained to a good standard. The home has recently been decorated and furnished with some new specialist equipment.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Members of staff work hard to support and enable young people to participate in community activities on an equal basis.

The Statement of Purpose accurately describes what young people can expect from living at the home and it is reviewed annually and updated.

Some of the supervision records were not available at the time of the inspection. The ones that were available show that members of staff do not receive regular formal supervision, the records are not always signed and it is not possible to confirm the length of time of each supervision session. A new member of staff has only received half of the required supervision sessions in the last five months. This information is needed to show that all staff are working in a safe way and that the young people are not being placed at risk through poor practice.

Regular staff meetings are held, which give members of staff the opportunity to discuss individual young people and to seek advice and support from colleagues as well as the manager.

The staff team providing the care and services to young people are not receiving the level of training that is expected and needed. The training records could not confirm that all members of staff are receiving the minimum required level of training each year. Also they could only show that 50% of staff are trained to a minimum National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People.

The arrangements for the internal and external monitoring of the home and the care and welfare of the young people are satisfactory. The manager monitors, compiles and forwards the home's records and statistics to external managers to identify any patterns or issues requiring action. The management monthly visits take place at the right times and the written reports are sent to the home. There is an annual development plan in place for the home.

Young people's case files are kept accurately and the records of their needs, development and progress, reflects each young person's individuality.

What must be done to secure future 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 Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Std.	Action	Due date
28	ensure that all persons employed by the registered person receive appropriate supervision (Regulation 27 (4) (a))	14/03/2011
28	ensure that all new persons employed by the registered person receive appropriate supervision to include one-to-one supervision at least fortnightly during the first six months of their employment (Regulation 27 (4) (a))	14/03/2011
29	ensure that 80% of the work force are qualified to National Vocational Qualification at level 3 (Regulation 27)	04/04/2011
31	ensure that all persons employed by the registered person receive appropriate training to include at least six paid days training per year. (Regulation 27.4.a)	21/03/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure that all of the accident form sections are completed. (NMS 12.3)