

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC000673
Inspection date	26 October 2009
Inspector	Dennis Bradley
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	19 July 2009
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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 outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

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 six 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 and is close to a variety of community resources, that includes a leisure centre, swimming pool, theatre and library.

Summary

Not all the standards have been covered at this interim inspection. However, the evidence gained will be used to form part of the overall judgement at the next key inspection. Therefore the overall judgement remains the same as the previous key inspection. The inspection was unannounced.

One purpose of this inspection was to check on the progress made to address requirements and recommendations raised following the last inspection. These related to: staff induction, supervision and training; risk assessments; information about how to complain, and obtaining permission to administer first aid. All the key standards for the Every Child Matters outcome area 'staying safe' were also assessed.

There was evidence of very positive relationships between the staff and young people who use the service. The home's policies and procedures for administering medicines help safeguard young people's welfare. The home provides a secure, safe setting for the young people. Staff respect the privacy and dignity of young people and make sure their welfare is promoted. The opportunities for staff to receive appropriate training are satisfactory. There are good arrangements for providing staff with support and supervision, and for monitoring the service and the care and welfare of the young people.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The Registered Person was asked to make a number of improvements in the home. They were asked to: ensure staff receive appropriate supervision and appraisal; provide staff with training in complaints procedures and communicating with children with disabilities; improve the arrangements for monitoring the home; obtain appropriate permission for staff to administer first aid; ensure people are given appropriate information about how to complain; ensure suitable risk assessments are carried out in relation to the premises and the potential for bullying within the home; maintain appropriate records of the induction provided to agency staff.

The Registered Person has taken action to address the above matters and this helps to make sure young people get the right care and are kept safe.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

There are good arrangements for storing, administering and monitoring the young people's medication. These help protect their health and meet their health care needs. There are suitable records and procedures covering the administration of medicines for this purpose. Most staff have had relevant training. Staffing arrangements ensure appropriate support is available for the young people at all times. For example, there is always a member of staff on duty who is trained in first aid. Arrangements are now in place to obtain appropriate consent for staff to administer first aid to young people.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people's privacy is promoted. This is evident when staff support and assist young people with their personal care. Staff also respect young people's preferences regarding their personal care. They make sure information about young people is handled confidentially and stored securely. There are detailed policies and procedures in place to help ensure this happens.

There are clear procedures for managing complaints appropriately and ensuring young people and their families are listened to. Information about how to complain can be made available in different formats to meet the communication needs of some of the young people. Staff treat any complaints or concerns seriously and they are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

The home has robust 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. There are no current safeguarding issues but records show that staff take appropriate action where there are any such concerns.

The 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. Staffing levels and the vigilance of staff help make sure that any bullying behaviour would be dealt with promptly. Staff try to help the young people to develop an understanding of each others diverse needs and the importance of tolerance. However, some staff have not had training in strategies to counter bullying.

There have been no incidents involving young people going missing. This is due to the level of supervision staff provide as well as young people being unable to leave the premises without permission.

Staff are good at encouraging and supporting the young people to develop and maintain socially acceptable behaviour. They give very positive messages to young people to reinforce acceptable behaviour. Staff very rarely use sanctions and when they do these are relevant and reasonable. There are clear procedures and guidance for staff regarding how they should manage the behaviour of young people. Some young people have individual behaviour management plans and staff agree these plans with the young people's families and relevant professionals. Some

staff have not had their training in positive behaviour management and use of physical intervention kept up-to-date.

There are appropriate systems in place to keep the young people and adults safe from the risk of fire and other potential hazards. For example, staff carry out a range of risk assessments and regular checks of the home's fire safety equipment. There are also good arrangements for carrying out regular checks of equipment such as electrical appliances, hoisting equipment and the home's boilers.

The home has appropriate procedures for making sure it only employs suitable people. There are suitable arrangements for monitoring and managing visitors to the home. These help ensure they do not have inappropriate access to young people. Staff also carry out appropriate checks on any agency staff who commence working at the home.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is not judged.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

There are appropriate arrangements in place for making sure staff receive support and supervision in safeguarding and promoting young people's welfare. Full and part time staff also receive an annual appraisal.

There are satisfactory arrangements for providing staff with training in caring for children and young people. The majority of staff are very experienced and have a suitable qualification confirming they have the competencies needed to care for young people. Some of those who don't are undertaking suitable training. However, some staff who have been employed at the home for more than three months have not yet commenced this training. This includes two people who have been working at the home for over a year. Apart from core training such as child protection staff can also access some short courses that cover the specific needs of some of the young people. However, some staff have not received any training in strategies to counter bullying and some have not had their training in positive behaviour management and the use of restraint kept up-to-date. There are good arrangements for providing staff with induction training and this is clearly recorded. Staff receive training in equality and diversity as part of their induction.

There are good arrangements for the internal and external monitoring of the home and the care and welfare of the young people. A person carries out monthly unannounced monitoring visits and completes detailed reports that may identify actions that are required to improve the service. The Registered Manager also monitors the home's records each month to identify any issues that they may need to address and they complete a report of the outcome of these checks.

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 meets the Care Standards Act 2000, The Childrens Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
31	ensure that all staff receive appropriate training that is kept up to date, in particular training in: exercising positive means of control and the use of restraint; awareness of and effective strategies to counter bullying. (Regulation 27)	31 March 2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure that new staff hold a relevant qualification in caring for children and young people or begin working towards a relevant qualification within three months of joining the home. (NMS 29.5)