

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Michelle Oxley
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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 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 is registered with Ofsted to provide accommodation for one young person, of either gender, aged between seven years and under 18 years of age. The home cares for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Staffing levels are provided to meet each young person's identified needs. The home's manager is registered with Ofsted.

The home is a semi-detached house, located in a residential setting within a village; local services are within easy reach. A more comprehensive range of public services, shopping and leisure facilities can be accessed in the nearby town. The home comprises of a sitting room with dining area and a kitchen on the ground floor. On the upper floor is the young person's and the staff member's bedrooms, the staff office and a family bathroom. There is an enclosed garden at the rear of the property; roadside parking is available.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an unannounced inspection against key national minimum standards. The action and recommendation from the previous inspection are also followed up.

The home continues to provide a good standard of care to young people. Young people are well supported to develop skills for independence. They receive good support to help them to integrate well in to the local community, using local services and developing friendships. Following this inspection there is one recommendation concerning minor repairs to fixtures and fittings.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection there was one action and one recommendation made. The action concerned the installation of a more effective heating system. This has now been installed and the action is fully met. The recommendation concerned damage to the kitchen work unit which has not been repaired. This recommendation is therefore repeated this inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young people are provided with healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. They enjoy the food provided and are involved in devising the menu. Young people are encouraged to develop their cookery skills as part of preparation for independence.

Young people's health needs are well catered for. Registration with GP dentist and optician is carried out soon after the young person is admitted to the home. Where possible young people are able to retain their previous medical practitioners. Health needs and medical appointments are set out in the placement plan. Clear information is provided to staff about health needs which may pose a risk. Good health is promoted by the involvement of outside agencies where a need is identified. Young people also receive advice and written information from staff about how to stay healthy.

The systems to deal with medication are robust. There is currently no medication held on the premises however adequate storage and recording mechanisms are in place. Staff have received training in first aid and medical permission is obtained regarding providing emergency medical treatment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people's privacy is protected and respected at the home. Young people say that they can have time alone without unnecessary interruptions from staff. Bathrooms are fitted with privacy locks. Young people can use their own mobile or the house phone in privacy. Policy guidance for staff is in place regarding privacy and confidentiality.

There are good systems in place to manage complaints. Young people are aware of how to use the home procedure. They also say that they can approach house staff or the home's director to raise complaints and concerns. The complaint log contains one new recording since the last visit. A complaints policy is in place.

The home's procedures protect and promote young people's welfare. Young people say that they feel safe and well supported at the home. Staff receive regular training in safeguarding young people. In practice staff know how to deal with allegations or suspicions of abuse. The team have easily accessible written guidance to follow. Systems are in place to counter bullying at the home. Young people do not feel that there is a problem with bullying. The risk of bullying is identified and recorded. A counter bullying policy is in place.

Procedures are in place to protect young people who are absent without authority

from the home. An individual risk based approach to managing absences is in place. A good recording system is in place which ensures that relevant individuals and agencies are notified. There have been no recent absences from the home without authority.

The restraint log contains a number of physical intervention concerning the behaviour management of the previous resident. There is a recorded decline in the use of restraint as the placement progresses indicating that restraint is not routinely used at the home. The young person currently living at the home has not been restrained. Staff receive regular training in physical interventions. Sanctions are sometimes used for younger children these are relevant and proportionate to the behaviour displayed.

Relevant health and safety checks of the building are carried out. Fire safety equipment checks are carried out at the required intervals. A Health and safety risk assessment is in place, gas and electrical installation checks have been carried out.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young people benefit from good individualised care at the home. The home offers care on a one-to-one basis ensuring that the team are able to focus on individual needs. Staff support young people moving into adulthood, to access professional services. Staff support young people to develop their skills and to take controlled risks, appropriate to their age and understanding, to further their personal development and take part in the community.

The home encourages young people to fulfil their potential in education in order to access future work opportunities. Links are made with relevant professionals and other agencies such as Connexions in order to establish further education opportunities. The home has supported young people to find work, transporting them to job interviews and visiting the job centre with them.

Young people can take part in activities and pursue their leisure interests. Young people's particular interests are well supported by the team who encourage participation independent of staff and in line with the young person's age. The team ensure that young people have access to the local area by purchasing a bus pass for independent travel.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young people have their needs reviewed and assessed on an ongoing basis. The quality of placement planning at the home is excellent. Placement plan's are updated frequently in line with young people's ongoing situation. Plans are devised in conjunction with staff and young people. The documents are well written and

provide good detail about how to provide care for the young person. Young people's needs are reviewed formally in line with statutory requirements. Young people attend their reviews and receive a copy of the minutes.

The arrangements for contact are set out in young people's placement plan's. Young people confirm that contact takes place in line with the arrangements stated and are well supported by staff.

The home take a collaborative approach to care. The team maintain close links with relevant professionals and parents and operate the home in consultation with them. There are systems in place to ensure that young people's views are heard. These include a weekly young person's meeting and an 'opinions' form which seeks young people's views about the service provided.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The house is a modern property, which is clean, comfortable and well decorated. Young people have single rooms which they can decorate and personalise. Although the home is generally well maintained, the kitchen work surface is slightly damaged, as is the toilet seat. This continues to impact on the effectiveness of hygiene and cleaning routines.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

A Statement of Purpose is in place, this reflects the service provided and is updated to reflect changes in provision. A welcome guide is provided for young people on admission, this is well written and provides good information to young people.

Staffing levels are maintained at one to one. The staff team is stable and provides consistency for the young person. Staff receive good support from managers through weekly meetings and through the supervision process. Good training opportunities are available to the team, an ongoing rolling programme of training ensures that the team are kept up to date with all mandatory training courses. A programme of National Vocational Qualifications levels 3 and 4 is well established.

The home is monitored on a monthly basis by the Regulation 33 visitor. Reports are well written and points for action are acted upon. Relevant logs and records are signed by the manager and the Regulation 33 visitor. Internal monitoring carried out by the manager is up to date. The administration of the home is well organised and effective.

The promotion of equality and diversity at the home is good. The team have a good understanding of the barriers which may prevent young people from reaching their full potential. They support young people who are disadvantaged to access

opportunities and lifestyles consistent with their age and cultural background. Policy and procedure documents are in place regarding equality and diversity.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Recommendations

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

- ensure the interior and exterior of the home are maintained in a good state of repair, and any damage is promptly repaired. In particular this relates to the kitchen worktop and toilet seat. (NMS 24.3)