

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	11 January 2010
Inspector	Stephanie Omosevwerha
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	9 June 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 is a short stay residential home for children and young people with physical and/or learning disabilities. It is run by a local charitable organisation. The home provides care to meet the child's and young person's physical, social and emotional needs during their stay. It is registered to provide care for up to seven children at any one time. Day care is also provided.

The home is sited in a residential area and accommodation is arranged over two floors. The house offers five bedrooms, one which is a double room, on the first floor and communal areas on the ground floor consisting of a lounge, dining room/conservatory and kitchen. The first floor does not have wider hallways or doors, which can make it difficult to move children that use a wheelchair. Suitably adapted bathroom and toilet facilities are available on both floors. A lift is provided between floors. The home has a front garden, which provides access to the home and a rear garden used for the children's play.

Due to the reduction in occupancy levels, the home closes on certain days each week, unless there are planned bookings or it is a school holiday. When children are accommodated in the home there are at least two members of staff on each shift. At night there is one waking and one sleep in member of staff.

At the time of this inspection, two children were being cared for in the home. One was staying overnight and one was being provided with day care.

Summary

This was an unannounced interim inspection covering all key standards in staying safe and some standards in being healthy and organisation.

The home provides a good standard of care to children during short respite breaks away from home. They are cared for by a competent staff team who have the skills and experience to look after children, especially those with more complex health care needs. Children are kept safe by staff following good working practices and an environment that is well maintained and hazard free. Staff are clear about their responsibilities to promote children's welfare and an open ethos ensure any issues or concerns are raised immediately and dealt with. The home is effectively run and good staffing levels ensure children have the care and attention they need.

One requirement made at the previous inspection regarding ensuring children are in the home during monitoring visits had not been met as no visits had taken place since the previous inspection. A new requirement has been made as all aspects relating to the regulations for monitoring visits now need to be undertaken. One recommendation regarding staff recruitment could not be assessed at this inspection and it is therefore, carried forward to be addressed at the next key inspection of the home.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were two requirements and two recommendations made at the previous inspection covering health and safety, monitoring visits, fire drills and recruitment. One requirement and one recommendation had been fully met.

An up-to-date gas safety certificate was in place ensuring that the home is safe and hazard free.

Records of fire drills now include the time that they took place to facilitate monitoring that these are taking place during different times of the day.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's well being is promoted by robust procedures for administering medication. The home deals with large numbers of medication coming in and out of the home as children stay for short breaks only. Staff have developed highly effective systems to manage medication and ensure records provide clear audit trails of all medication administered. This ensures any mistakes are picked up immediately and prompt action is taken to protect children from further errors.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's privacy is respected balanced with providing the support and supervision they need in order to keep them safe. This is particularly important when providing intimate care which is carried out sensitively to promote the dignity of the child. Staff know how to deal with and share information in order to ensure confidentiality is protected. The home encourages an open ethos and promptly deals with both minor and more serious complaints to ensure they are investigated thoroughly and appropriate action is taken.

Children are appropriately safeguarded in the home with robust policies and procedures in place that are known and understood by staff ensuring they are vigilant in their duties to protect children's welfare. Children are unlikely to leave the home unsupervised so the risk of them going missing is extremely small and records confirm no incidents have occurred.

Children accommodated in the home have predominantly significant health needs and only a small minority present challenging behaviours. There are no real problems with bullying in the home due to children's understanding. There may be occasions when behaviours such as hair pulling, biting or scratching take place, however, these behaviours may be indiscriminate and do not have real intent to single out a specific victim as in bullying. Staff work with clear behaviour management plans using techniques such as diversion or removing the child from a particular room to effectively modify behaviour. Staff successfully encourage socially acceptable behaviour by the use of praise and rewards rather than using sanctions or interventions which are only used in extreme incidents.

The home provides a safe environment and all servicing and maintenance checks are up-to-date. Staff demonstrate a good awareness of safe working practices to promote children's welfare and minimise any identified risks both in the home and out in the community. Recruitment records were not available at this inspection as they are now located at the organisation's

human resources office, so this will standard will be fully assessed at the next inspection of 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.

Children receive the care they need from a competent staff team who have the relevant skills to look after the group of children in the home. This includes specific knowledge of issues such as communication needs, manual handling and the provision of intimate care. Shifts are well organised so staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and are well supported by senior staff. Children benefit from high staffing levels ensuring they receive the care and attention they need. Low numbers of staff turnaround contributes to consistency of care with positive relationships being formed between children and staff.

The Manager effectively monitors all aspects of the service to ensure standards are being maintained and improved where necessary. However, recently there have been no monitoring visits carried out by the Registered Provider to provide an independent view of the standards of care in the home. Although this does not have an immediate impact on children accommodated in the home, it is a useful safeguard put in place to promote children's welfare and is a regulatory requirement.

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
32	undertake monthly visits as set out in Regulation 33.	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 written recruitment records contain full information concerning gaps in employment and verification of why employment ended when the position involved work with children or vulnerable adults (NMS 27.1).