

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC005042
Inspection date	29/03/2011
Inspector	Mark Ryder
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	03/11/2010
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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, which is also a school, provides care and education for up to 10 young people aged between 11 and 16 years who have significant social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The home comprises a large detached property set in its own grounds that provide for a range of activities. Young people are able to access local leisure activities in the immediate neighbourhood. The home has transport to take the young people to those facilities that are a travelling distance away.

There were nine young people in placement of whom five contributed to some degree with this inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

At this unannounced interim inspection all key standards under staying safe were assessed. No other outcome area was inspected. The home continues to provide a good standard of care and support for young people with complex emotional or behavioural difficulties. Staff are motivated and competent to provide young people with safe and stimulating placements. Young people feel respected and valued. Health and safety practice within this home keeps young people safe.

There was one recommendation made with regards to the recording of the outcome from young people who are missing from the home. It was not clear if young people are routinely spoken to about the reasons for leaving the home. Trends or patterns of behaviour are therefore not easy to monitor.

Improvements since the last inspection

There was one recommendation made as a result of the last inspection which has been met. The Registered Manager was asked to include the date of when complaints were finalised. Records now reflect this. This means that complaints can be monitored to ensure the conclusion of the actions taken are within reasonable timescales.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people continue to live in a home which affords them a good quality of care. Young people feel valued and listened to. Privacy is respected and confidential information is managed sensitively. A young person said 'staff always knock on my bedroom door before they enter'.

Staff respond promptly to bullying. This is regularly discussed during resident meetings to help young people understand the impact such behaviour can have on an individual. Assessment of risk of young people's vulnerability is reviewed periodically. This means that staff can support young people if they are deemed to be at risk of bullying. Young people feel that bullying is not currently a concern.

Complaints are dealt with within suitable timescales. Young people are aware of the complaints process and are encouraged to talk to senior staff about any concerns they have. If young people wish, they can make an appointment with the Registered Manager or deputy during a day set aside for such meetings. This works well. Young people value having dedicated time to raise their issues with senior staff in this way.

Staff follow correct reporting procedures if young people are missing from the home without consent. There is regularly contact with the local liaison police officer who knows the staff and young people. This promotes good working practices. However, records of when young people go missing do not always include details of the reasons why they were missing and the actions taken by staff to minimise future incidents. This means the management team cannot always identify any patterns or trends of why young people are absent.

Staff understand how to safeguard and care for young people effectively. Training and discussion on protecting young people from harm is regular. Staff understand their role as well as what actions to take in the event of inappropriate conduct by a colleague. The staff team works, however, in an open and transparent manner in which staff are able to raise any issues with each other. Staff receive a good level of support to do their job well.

Staff manage young people's behaviour effectively. Working on each young person's positive attributes develops a culture of high expectations. Young people are given praise and rewards for good behaviour which they respond to. Sanctions and the use of restraint are a last resort. Young people said they understood the need for sanctions and that they were fair.

Health and safety of young people is maintained through regular fire checks, drills and maintenance of gas and electrical appliances and installations. Young people, therefore, live in a home which is safe.

Recruitment of staff is robust and detailed. Staff go through a vetting and checking process before they work with young people. Visitors identification is checked and a signing in and out procedure is in operation. This means that adults who work or visit young people have been assessed as suitable.

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 not judged.

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 written records are made of the circumstances of all incidents of absconding, all action taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return, any reasons given by the child for absconding and any action taken in the light of those reasons. (NMS 19.6)