

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC005204
Inspection date	16 June 2010
Inspector	Karen Forster
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	14 January 2010
--------------------------------	-----------------

© Crown copyright 2010

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 Cripins, 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 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

This service forms part of the residential childcare services provided by an independent company. The service provides integrated packages of care, therapy and education to a maximum of six children with reactive attachment difficulties, aged five to 17 years.

An integral school is provided on the same site, and the outdoor play area and car park are shared. The Ofsted inspection of the school was conducted alongside this inspection. A copy of the Ofsted report for the school can be found on the Ofsted website. Five young people were resident at the time of the visit, who all contributed towards the inspection.

Summary

This visit is an unannounced interim inspection, focusing on the outcome areas of staying safe and achieving economic well-being. The recommendations from the last inspection were reviewed with the home. This is an outstanding service, where outcomes for young people are excellent. Practice consistently demonstrates individualised care and support that reflect young people's needs exceptionally well. High quality personal care and therapy are integral parts of individual care programmes. Very minor shortfalls relate to: the recording of physical intervention; fridge temperatures; and the quality of some isolated light fittings. These issues do not impact on the positive outcomes for young people.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The last report raised three recommendations. Young people's accrued personal allowances are now clearly included within a record of valuables, which enables individuals to check on their savings. Improvements to the maintenance and furnishings within the home have been suitably completed as recommended at the last inspection. The level of maintenance in the home has improved, which means damage is addressed promptly. The home has refurbished areas of the home, with new plasterwork and carpets. The recommendation in relation to the management of the risk of the hot water temperature has been addressed. The risk continues to be clearly assessed and managed, and strategies allow for young people to prepare their own bath water.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The home promotes the privacy of young people extremely well. Staff are very careful to respect young people's privacy. This means that young people can spend uninterrupted time in their own bedrooms and when bathing. The bathroom is fitted with a lock which can be over-ridden from the outside, which means that access can be achieved in an emergency. Personal data relating to young people is stored securely in line with internal policy and the required standards. Staff demonstrate a very high regard for confidentiality, which means that young people's personal details are not shared unnecessarily.

The home maintains an excellent procedure for the collection of compliments and complaints from service users, their families and other stakeholders. The active dialogue between young people, staff, the young people's families and social workers is evidenced by the home's records of complaints and compliments. This means that young people's comments are taken seriously and suitably followed up. The details included within the young people's guide and accounts of key-worker sessions, indicate that young people are aware of their local authority's representations procedure.

Children's safeguarding procedures are extremely good, with young people's welfare given the highest priority. Staff confirm that they are aware of their responsibilities within the home's child protection procedures. This means that practice follows procedure, to keep young people safe. The local authority's safeguarding manual of procedures is available within the home, along with contact details for the safeguarding team. Staff also receive comprehensive safeguarding training, which means they know how to manage disclosures of abuse.

There is a comprehensive anti-bullying policy maintained within the service, where the stated aim is to manage any episodes of bullying and to prevent further incidents occurring. Young people relate some episodes of bullying behaviour, which have been addressed with those involved. The issue of bullying is also considered regularly with all members of the group. This means that young people can talk openly about bullying, and feel able to pass on their concerns.

The home maintains consistent and robust search procedures when young people leave the home without permission. There is a clear agreement with the local police over missing young people. This means that all episodes of missing young people are taken very seriously, and are followed up with suitable responses. This provides young people with a warm welcome home, and a suitable follow up of their reasons for leaving.

Young people are supported to manage their own behaviour. This is achieved through the open communication between staff and individuals, and the staff team working closely together. Positive consequences are used consistently well within the group, to capture and celebrate positive behaviour. Young people receive individual and well-planned staff responses to any presenting unacceptable behaviour. These positive approaches are included within young people's comprehensive behaviour management strategies. The young people make good use of regular opportunities to share their feelings with staff. This means that feelings of success, pride, frustration, confusion and worry, for example, are shared with trusted adults. This positive practice supports the home's culture of openness and the non-violent expression of personal feelings.

The home's policy regarding physical intervention meets the standards. All of the staff team have received recent instruction in the safe control of challenging behaviours. The preferred model of physical intervention includes de-escalation and only uses restraint as a last resort. This meets the standards and helps to keep young people safe. While the home's procedure for recording restraints meets the requirements of the standards, the last volume of restraint records has some loose pages. The numbered entries indicate that there are no missing pages, and therefore there is no impact on the outcomes for young people.

The home ensures that the environment young people live in is safe and free of hazards; this helps young people to feel physically safe in the home. This sound level of health and safety within the home is achieved through the regular servicing of utility appliances within the

premises. The home also pays close attention to fire safety risk assessment and risk management. The last assessment by the environmental health department indicates a satisfactory level of food safety. This means that young people's food is safely prepared, with a clear regard for hygiene. However, the home's records of fridge temperatures indicate a reading that is consistently at the highest end of the permitted range. There is no evidence of any impact on young people or staff who consume the home's food; therefore positive outcomes in this area are still achieved.

The home completes all of the clearance checks for new staff, as required by the regulations. The well-maintained personnel records carry the details of these checks, and demonstrate the robust recruitment programme in use in the home. This means that suitably cleared staff care for young people within 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 good.

The three recommendations which were made in relation to this outcome area have all been addressed as described in the improvement section of the report, thus enhancing the outcome for young people. While the communal areas are comfortable, some strip fluorescent light fittings detract from the domestic style of the small lounges. Single bedrooms are provided for young people, which are well decorated and highly personalised.

Organisation

The organisation is not judged.

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
----------	--------	----------

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home's log for records of physical intervention is securely bound (NMS 22.9)
- ensure that the home's food storage arrangements meet food safety guidance criteria (NMS 26.4)

- ensure that the home is furnished to a standard which creates a domestic environment, especially in relation to the fluorescent strip light fittings within the ground floor rooms. (NMS 24.2)