

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC005553
Inspection date	19 August 2010
Inspector	Helen Walker
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	21 October 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

This home provides care for up to seven young people, of either gender, aged from 7 to 17 years.

The house is detached and set in its own grounds in a residential area near to the town. Public transport links, as well as shops and leisure facilities, are easily accessible. There are six bedrooms for the young people, one of which is a double room. This would be used for siblings. The accommodation also includes a lounge, kitchen/dining room, games room, kitchen and two staff offices.

Five young people live in the home and were on holiday at the time of the inspection.

Summary

The purpose of this unannounced interim inspection is to follow up on an action and recommendation made at the last inspection and to assess key standards under the outcome area of 'staying safe'.

The home continues to provide a good level of care to young people. The action and recommendation made at the last inspection are commented on in the improvement section of this report.

Four of the five young people who live in this home have been resident for over 18 months. Therefore, the home environment presents as settled with consistent care to the young people.

There are good safeguarding practices in place to protect young people from harm. The home environment is well maintained with systems to ensure health and safety checks are carried out. The acting manager actively promotes fire safety awareness so that the young people are aware of the dangers of fires and familiar with preventative measures.

At this time there is no Registered Manager in post. However, the assistant manager of the home, who has significant childcare experience, is now acting manager. The process to appoint a Registered Manager is underway.

As a result of this inspection one action is made. This is to ensure that the acting manager effectively monitors the sanction record.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection one action and one recommendation were made. There is now clear guidance for staff and information for young people about when it may be necessary to search a child's possessions. This means staff and young people are made aware of when and why this takes place.

Records show the effectiveness and consequences of the use of any physical restraint in the home. However, this is still not the case with sanctions. Therefore, the appropriateness of the

use of some sanctions is not fully considered by the acting manager to ensure they are effective measures.

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.

Confidentiality is managed effectively and personal records are securely stored. Young people have an individual bedroom which provides them with their own personal space. They have access to a telephone in the home and most have a mobile phone. This allows them to make calls in private without reference to staff.

Staff are aware of the need to keep young people safe. They receive training and are familiar with safeguarding guidance. Staff follow this guidance in order to help to protect the young people from harm.

The complaints procedure is known to the young people and they have the opportunity to raise any issues they are unhappy with. Any complaint is taken seriously and dealt with appropriately. Key worker sessions and house meetings give young people a forum to have their say. Young people also have contact with people they can talk to who are independent of the home, such as the advocacy service, health and education professionals.

Good procedures are in place should young people go missing from the home. Staff record unauthorised absences fully, with details of the action taken to try to ensure the young person's safe return. Staff confirm bullying is not tolerated and that this is not an issue in the home at this time.

The home environment is well maintained with systems in place to ensure regular health and safety checks are carried out. This includes gas and electrical checks to ensure equipment is safe to use. The acting manager is proactive in raising young people's awareness of fire safety. Officers from the local fire and rescue service came to the home and talked to the young people about fire safety. This was very successful and the young people achieved a fire safety awareness certificate.

Young people are encouraged to develop appropriate and acceptable behaviours. Staff promote a positive culture within the house which includes rewards and incentives for young people. Young people have the opportunity to obtain more pocket money and additional trips to places of interest. This includes visits to the seaside and theme parks. Also, staff encourage young people to be positively occupied and involve themselves in other activities, for example, horse riding.

Staff receive support and training to assist them to deal properly with challenging behaviour. Few physical interventions indicate they are skilful to resolve issues before behaviour escalates. Although sanctions are recorded for inappropriate behaviour, these are not consistently reviewed to demonstrate they are effective disciplinary measures for the young people.

Thorough recruitment and employment procedures are in place which helps to confirm that staff are suitable to work with young people.

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?**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
22	ensure records show the effectiveness and consequences of the use of any sanction. (Regulation 17.4)	26 August 2010

Recommendations

There are no recommendations.