

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Bill Drumm
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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

Care and accommodation is provided at the home for up to four young people aged from five-years-old up to 17-years-old. This children's home is situated on a busy main road, close to all the usual amenities and public transport links. The home provides single room accommodation for three young people and a bed-sit for a young person preparing for independent living. The home aims to provide care on a medium to long-term basis and provides accommodation, care, food, clothing, activities and a holiday for the young people.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection of the home. The outcome area for young people in the area of staying safe was inspected and found to be good. There were five recommendations made at the previous inspection and four were found to have been met. Young people receive good levels of help and support from a trained and committed staff team. Care planning arrangements are good and young people are consulted about the care they receive. The home's records are maintained to a good standard and all information relating to young people is kept safe and secure.

At the time of the inspection three young people were living at the home, one of whom was present during the inspection although they did not directly contribute to the inspection process.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the home's manager has reviewed the protocol for making child protection referrals to the local safeguarding team to ensure the home's procedures are adhered to and followed. In addition, each young person's placement plan and risk assessments are regularly monitored and reviewed. The manager ensures that all members of the staff team receive regular, formal supervision at least once each month. Members of staff have either successfully completed their National Vocational Qualification training at level 3 in the Caring of Children and Young People, have commenced this course of study or have a start date to begin.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All members of staff have undertaken training in the safe handling and administration of medication. Policies and procedures relating to the safe handling and administration of medication are in place, although they do not take full account of the specific safeguards required for the safe administration of controlled drugs. This was raised at the previous inspection of the home. Young people may not be fully protected by the home's medication administration systems.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Members of staff were observed to be pleasant and friendly towards the young person living at the home who was present during the inspection process. All young people at the home have their own bedroom, which they are encouraged to keep clean and tidy. Young people are also encouraged to personalise their bedrooms. The home has policies and procedures in place, which explain what action members of staff should take when it is necessary to search a young person's bedroom. No room searches have been carried out since the last inspection. Personal information relating to each young person is stored securely to prevent unauthorised access. Young people living at the home are treated with dignity and respect.

There are policies and procedures in place for dealing with complaints in an effective and timely manner. Three complaints have been made by young people since the last inspection. Written records show that these complaints were fully investigated and that the young person themselves were satisfied with the outcome. Three compliments have also been received by the home. The young people's guide provides clear information to young people about the complaints process. All members of staff have received training in the complaints process and young people know how to complain if they are unhappy with any aspect of living at the home.

Young people living at the home are protected from exploitation and abuse. A copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures is available in the home. There has been no child protection referrals made since the last inspection. The home's manager ensures that staff members follow the home's procedures, and that all safeguarding concerns are referred immediately to the Local Safeguarding Children Board. All members of staff working at the home have undertaken training in child protection and the welfare of young people is promoted effectively.

The home has policies and procedures in place with regard to countering bullying and all members of staff have received training in countering bullying. The young people's guide to the home includes clear information for young people about what action they should take if they feel they are being targeted by bullies. Information about independent agencies that can help young people, if they feel they are being bullied, is available within the home. The manager of the home has not written a

countering bullying risk assessment of the times, places and circumstances when bullying might occur. Young people may not be fully protected from bullying.

There have been a number of occasions since the last inspection when young people have been absent without authority, and the home has effective policies and procedures in place with regard to what action members of staff should take if a young person is missing.

The home has policies and procedures in place relating to the safe holding or restraint of young people, and members of staff have received appropriate training. Restraint records are retained within a separate bound and numbered book used specifically for that purpose. The written records meet national minimum standards and regulations. There have been a number of restraints used within the home since the last inspection, and written records relating to these occasions have been completed appropriately. The home also has policies and procedures in place, which relate to the sanctions members of staff are permitted to use to help young people modify their behaviour. Sanction records have also been completed appropriately. Young people are encouraged and enabled to develop socially acceptable behaviour.

Young people are protected from fire and other hazards within the home. There are good systems in place to ensure that young people, members of staff and visitors to the home are kept safe and free from hazards. Fire drills are carried out at regular intervals and these include some undertaken at night. Risk assessments are undertaken on the known and likely activities carried out by young people. These risk assessments are thorough and help to protect young people from the risk of accident or injury.

There have been no new appointments to the staff team at the home since the last inspection. Written records show that thorough and detailed checks are carried out to ensure that all members of staff are suitable to work with young people. Young people living at the home are provided with physical safety and security and are protected from being exposed to potential abusers.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Young people are looked after by members of staff who are very well supported and properly managed. All members of staff receive regular, formal supervision. The manager also makes herself available to talk with members of staff should they need to do so. Staff meetings are held at regular intervals.

Young people receive the care and services they need from well trained, competent staff. All members of staff are either trained to a minimum National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People, are currently undertaking this training or are awaiting a start date. Consistency of care is provided to young people and there are clear arrangements in place for members of staff to deputise in the absence of the manager.

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):

- review the home's policy and procedures for the safe handling and administration of medication to ensure the administration of controlled drugs is fully considered.
- write a countering bullying risk assessment of the times, places and circumstances when bullying might occur. (NMS 18.5)