

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	18 January 2010
Inspector	Bill Drumm
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	10 July 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

Care and accommodation is provided at the home for up to four young people aged from 11 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

This was an unannounced interim inspection of the home. The outcome areas for young people in the area of staying safe were inspected and found to be good. Recommendations made at the previous inspection were also looked at. All recommendations made at the previous inspection have been met. One recommendation has been made following this inspection and the overall quality rating of the home remains good.

Two young people currently live at the home, one of whom was present during the inspection process.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the manager has improved the internal monitoring systems for the home and the quality of care provided is regularly reviewed. The home's procedures relating to the administration of homely remedies has been reviewed and a more exhaustive list of which remedies each young person can take has been established. Members of staff working at the home have received training in how they can better support young people to achieve their maximum potential.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young people living at the home are protected by the home's medication administration systems. Policies and procedures relating to the safe handling and administration of medication are in place. Members of staff have undertaken training in the safe handling and administration of medication. In addition, the home's procedure for the administration of homely remedies has been reviewed. The review of this procedure is thorough. Members of staff and young people are fully aware of what homely remedies can be taken and in what quantity; this helps to ensure the safety and welfare of young people is maintained.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people living at the home are treated with dignity and respect. Members of staff were observed to treat one young person, who was present at the time of the inspection, in a friendly and caring manner, which was reciprocated by the young person themselves. There are sufficient bathrooms and toilets to meet the needs of the young people living at the home. Each young

person has their own bedroom, which they are encouraged to personalise in a style of their own choosing. 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. The confidentiality of young people is protected.

There are good procedures and systems in place to support young people who may wish to make a complaint. Information about complaints is freely available to young people, as are contact numbers for a range of agencies who can help young people. Members of staff working at the home have all received training in the complaints process. Six complaints have been made since the last inspection, all of which have been investigated and resolved. Young people are able to complain if they feel unhappy about any aspect of living at the home. Four compliments have also been received since the last inspection.

Procedures and guidance for identifying and reporting child protection concerns are very good. Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures are available to staff and these are supplemented by the home's policy and guidance. One child protection referral has been made since the last inspection. Records show that appropriate action was taken quickly and the welfare of the young person concerned was safeguarded. Safeguarding procedures from the local authorities placing young people at the home are also available. All staff have received child protection training. These measures all contribute towards safeguarding young people and keeping them safe.

Young people are protected from being targeted by bullies. The home has policies and procedures in place with regard to countering bullying and there have been no recorded incidents of bullying since the last inspection. The home's young people's guide includes information for young people about what action they should take if they feel bullies are targeting them. Members of staff working at the home have all received training in countering bullying.

The home has policies and procedures in place with regard to what action members of staff should take if a young person is absent without authority. Procedures fully comply with national minimum standards. There have been a small number of occasions since the last inspection when a young person has been absent without authority. However, the last occasion was some weeks ago. Young people who have been absent are responded to positively on their return.

Members of staff at the home work closely with young people to help them develop socially acceptable behaviour. Sanctions are used sparingly and their effectiveness is monitored by the home's management. All sanctions used appear reasonable and not excessive. Rewards or treats earned for positive behaviour by young people are also recorded. Records relating to sanctions are retained within a bound and numbered book used specifically for that purpose. The home places a strong emphasis on the use of positive reinforcement and all young people have behaviour management plans in place. Staff are trained in positive handling techniques and strategies. The use of holding or restraint is only ever used as a last resort. However, a number of holds or restraints have been used on young people since the last inspection. Written records relating to these incidents have been made. The reason for the restraint is not always fully documented and clear. This could put young people at risk.

Young people are protected from fire and other hazards within the home. There are excellent 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.

The home has a stable staff team and there are good recruitment and selection processes in place. Safety checks are carried out to ensure the suitability of each applicant. Each member of staff has provided references from previous employers or those who know them. Staff files include proof of identity and a recent photograph. Visitors to the home are asked to clearly identify themselves on their arrival and to sign the visitors' book. Recruitment procedures used at the home help to ensure young people are prevented from being exposed to potential abusers.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young people living at the home all attend school. Members of staff fully support young people in attending school in order to achieve their maximum potential. In addition, the home has independence training packages in place, which can be used by young people living at the home when they become teenagers. The training packages offer a structured process which young people can follow in order to develop their skills in activities of daily living.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is not judged.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The manager and members of staff encourage and support young people to take responsibility for their actions and to develop adult responsibilities. Young people are encouraged to participate in activities of daily living and to learn independence skills. Support is given where necessary, on an individual basis, to help them achieve their full potential. Staff at the home also work closely with the young people to help them develop skills for daily living.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The care of young people living at the home is monitored regularly. A system is in place, to ensure performance is monitored and any patterns or issues requiring action are highlighted.

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
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Recommendations

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

- improve the quality of all written information regarding the restraint or holding of a young person. (NMS 22.9)