

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Sarah Oldham
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Date of last inspection	31 March 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

The home is a single occupancy children's home, which provides care and accommodation for young people aged from 11 years old up to 17 years old, of either sex. The home is situated within a town and is within easy access of public transportation and local amenities.

Summary

The inspection of the home was unannounced, all key national minimum standards were inspected. The visit was used to assess the home's capacity to meet the outcome areas for young people in relation to being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, achieving economic well-being and organisation.

The home provides a good service. Placement plans for young people are clearly recorded and contain information that is current and reflects individual needs. Staff and young people have a positive relationship and this ensures that the young people respond well to support given to them.

The home's statement of purpose reflects the services that the home provides and is kept under review. The policies and procedures are in the process of being updated and amended to ensure that these also accurately reflect the aims and objectives of the home.

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 previous inspection, two actions relating to the health and safety of young people and ensuring that financial sanctions put in place do not exceed two thirds of a young person's pocket money. The home has addressed these, by ensuring that any items that are required to be stored securely to protect the health and safety of young people are stored appropriately. The financial sanction, although agreed with young people has been amended and records maintained demonstrated this.

Recommendations made regarding pathway plans and recording the cultural needs of young people have been addressed and this information was available on individual care files. The lock to the bathroom that was broken has been repaired.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The home encourages and supports young people to have a healthy diet. Menus are planned in conjunction with the young people, to ensure that individual likes and dislikes of food are taken into account when planning and preparing the meals. Young people are also involved in the shopping for food and when planning for independence, additional support is provided with regards budgeting and preparation of meals.

All young people are registered with a doctor, dentist and optician and details are maintained of individual health care needs. This is to promote individual health for the young people in accordance with their placement plans and individual health care plans. Where additional health

needs are identified, the home ensures that referrals are made and supported to specialist health care professionals. Annual health care reviews are undertaken and records of these are maintained.

The procedures for storing, recording and administering young people's medication are all managed safely. Sufficient numbers of staff are trained in the use of first aid and there are suitable provisions available for staff to administer emergency treatment, if required.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Information relating to the young people is stored within lockable cabinets and staff are aware of the importance of this. Training is provided to staff regarding this as part of the induction programme. Young people have adequate bathing facilities and appropriate locks are fitted to promote their privacy and dignity.

Staff ensure that the welfare and safety of young people is promoted and safeguarded. Examples of this includes procedures in place to respond appropriately to unauthorised absences, complaints or issues of bullying. Young people are supported to develop appropriate socially acceptable behaviour and staff work with young people to make positive changes to their behaviour. Young people say that staff have helped them to develop appropriate behaviours and this is evidenced by the fact that since the last inspection, there have been no sanctions or physical interventions.

Environmental checks are maintained to ensure that the home remains a safe environment for the young people. These include regular fire safety checks, including regular fire drills to ensure that staff and young people are aware of what to do in the event of a fire. Maintenance of gas and electrical equipment is up to date.

Recruitment and selection of staff was inspected at the previous inspection and found to be undertaken appropriately. All visitors to the home are requested to sign in and identification is checked to promote the safety of the young people living there.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young people at the home receive support and advice on an individual basis. This includes support with education, developing independent skills and seeking employment. In addition, individual specialist services are sourced if required, including specialist health services.

Young people are actively encouraged and supported to attend education and where appropriate, to pursue training or employment. Currently, young people resident have now left school, so they receive encouragement and support to attend college, to enhance their employment prospects for the future.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Placement plans for young people contain detailed information about the individual needs and how those needs will be met whilst living at the home. The placement plans and staff have a full understanding of how the plans are to be implemented. Each month a review of the plan

is undertaken and an updated report is made. These contribute to the young people's looked after children's reviews to inform the placing authority of the individual progress made between statutory reviews.

Where appropriate, young people are supported to maintain contact with their friends and families. Where young people are unable to have contact, the home ensures that young people have contact with an independent visitor. Such provisions enable young people to sustain and develop relationships outside of the home.

The home provides information to young people who are moving into the home and wherever possible encourages young people to visit the home beforehand. Plans are put into place to ensure that when a young person leaves the home they are supported to do so in a planned way. The home liaises with the placing authority and future services for the young person, to ensure that the transition of leaving the home is appropriate.

Young people's views are routinely sought and weekly children's meetings are held to consider the views of young people in relation to the running of the home. Young people therefore, feel listened to, involved and valued.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Cherry House is not physically distinguishable as a children's home, so young people do not feel stigmatised by living there. The home's location ensures that young people have good access to local amenities.

Cherry House comprises a lounge, dining area, kitchen, toilet, bathroom and sleeping facilities, for both young people and staff. To the front of the home is on the road parking and to the rear is a small rear paved garden. The home is maintained internally and externally to a good standard of decorative repair.

Young people are assisted to plan for independence, including budgeting, cooking and obtaining information and support in looking for employment, vocational training courses or further education.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The home has a statement of purpose in place. This details the aims and objectives of the home as well as the facilities available. This is kept under review and made available to interested parties including placing authorities. The home also has a children's and young person's guide that contains information about what it is like living at the home.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Staff have a good knowledge of young people's individual needs and young people's care plans are personalised. The staff team are diverse in terms of their age and gender and there is a genuine commitment towards anti-oppressive practice. Care plans include details of young people's cultural and religious needs and how they will be supported with these.

Staffing levels at the home are appropriate to meet the needs of the young people in placement. There is also a continuity of care due to the staff team remaining the same with no recent

additions to the staffing team. Young people feel that their needs are met effectively at the home. Internal and external monitoring systems are used effectively, to evaluate the home's performance. The home's manager monitors, reviews and checks the home's administrative systems to ensure that the home runs smoothly. Young people's private records are well organised and provide staff with a detailed account of young people's needs, progress and achievements.

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):

- ensure that the home's policies and procedures are updated and implemented to reflect that the home is operating in accordance with its statement of purpose (NMS 33.4)