

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Martin Davis
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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

The home is registered to accommodate up to five young people. The Statement of Purpose specifies an age range of 12 to 16 years on admission, with the specific intention of providing an assessment service. This will be for a maximum of 16 weeks.

The home is a detached property with a large garden situated in a residential area close to shops, amenities and public transport.

No young people were present at the time of the inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

This unannounced interim inspection followed up on the requirements made in the last report. In addition key standards were inspected under the outcome area staying safe.

The home continues to provide satisfactory standards of care to young people. An acting manager is now in post following the promotion of the home's Registered Manager to a regional role within the organisation. The acting manager has overseen a number of improvements in service provision and is currently undertaking a review of the home's Statement of Purpose. A recent staffing review has been undertaken and staffing structures now more closely reflect the assessment model that underpins each 16 week placement.

As an assessment centre the home works particularly well with external agencies including placing authorities, health services and the local police.

The home produces regular, detailed reports to placing authorities on progress made during placement; however there remain gaps in some key records so that comprehensive information to aid care planning is not available in all cases.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection of the home in August 2010 a total of five actions and five recommendations to improve practice were made. The response taken by the management team has been robust and all but one of the actions and recommendations are now met.

Staff recruitment processes have been amended so that a full employment history is

in place for each member of staff. Records relating to sanctions and restraints are now comprehensive, and a clear record is maintained of all medication entering and leaving the home. Staff ensure that healthy meals and snacks are available at every mealtime and they continue to work with young people to improve their diet. Work is still required to ensure that the staff register includes all of the information required by regulation.

Improvements to the management of health and safety matters within the home are effective and ensure that the environment in which young people live is safe. Information held on children's files has been reviewed and now provides a clear summary of each child's health needs and key contacts. Clearer evidence is now maintained within the home to demonstrate that all staff are aware of, and follow in practice, key policies and procedures.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people's privacy is respected and their bedrooms are treated as their personal space. Staff are mindful of their responsibilities to maintain confidentiality and ensure individual information is appropriately stored. Young people are encouraged to raise their concerns through a variety of forums, including resident's meetings, key working sessions and through discussion with senior managers who are regular visitors to the home. A formal complaints procedure is in place. While no recent complaints have been made, records show that where complaints are made these are taken seriously and acted on promptly to ensure they are fully resolved.

Young people are properly protected in the home by clear safeguarding procedures. All members of staff are trained so they are aware of their responsibilities if they are alerted to allegations or incidents of abuse. Staff recognise the potential for bullying to occur, they seek to intervene early wherever problems emerge and reported bully levels are low. Staff are fully aware of the procedures to follow if a young person goes missing. Staff work well in partnership with statutory agencies to ensure that robust action is taken where young people are missing. There are however some gaps in the records maintained within the home; as a result all staff do not have a full understanding of actions taken, information received and potential risk factors.

Young people benefit from clear and consistent boundaries within the home. Staff employ a range of strategies, including rewards and incentives, to successfully promote positive behaviour. The home provides a consistent staff group and rarely use agency or bank staff. All staff are trained in physical intervention, in recent months restraint has rarely been used. Sanctions applied are largely effective and

there is an appropriate external monitoring system in place to review and assess the impact of sanctions and restraint used within the home.

Young people live in a safe environment. Improvements to the management of health and safety matters and more effective maintenance of the building ensure that young people benefit from living in suitable accommodation.

No new staff have been recruited since the last inspection. Gaps in recruitment processes previously identified have been closed so that all staff working in the home have now been subject to appropriate employment checks.

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/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Std.	Action	Due date
27	ensure that the record in respect of each person working at the	09/02/2011

	home is maintained in accordance with the regulations (Regulation 29(1) Schedule 4(2))	
19	ensure that any information relating to the child's whereabouts when they are absent without authority is clearly recorded and available to staff. (Regulation 28(1) (Schedule 3(10))	09/02/2011