

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Sharon Lewis
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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

This is a privately run children's home. It provides accommodation and support to four young people of either sex, aged between 11 and 18 years old. The home is registered to care for young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties and young people with a mild mental disorder. The home is situated in a residential area, close to shops, transport networks and local amenities. At the time of this inspection two young people were living at the home. One was at home during the inspection. They provided very positive feedback, regarding their care.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This interim unannounced inspection focused on the staying safe outcome area. It also checked the progress the setting has made with the action and recommendations from the last inspection. Young people continue to benefit from a good service. The service focuses on young people's strengths and aims to help them maximise their potential. The only shortfall relates to clearly recording the necessary regulatory information regarding complaints.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the home was required to address one action and two recommendations. The home has effectively addressed all shortfalls. Young people benefit from the home's ongoing refurbishment programme. The kitchen worktop has been replaced. Although not required, the kitchen has also been repainted. This provides a more pleasant living environment for young people.

Two recommendations were made regarding the electrical installation certificate and residents' meetings. The electrical installation certificate now accurately has the correct interval information. This certificate needs to be updated on a five yearly basis. This contributes to providing safe accommodation for young people. Staff now maintain a record of their consultation meetings with young people. This provides a clear summary of discussions and further demonstrates that young people views influence decision making.

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.

Young people live within a home which prioritises their safety and welfare. Young people report that they feel 'safe and secure'. Care practices focus on the home's core values of respect, trust, honesty and the overarching commitment to young people. Staff take time to get to know young people and build a mutually respectful relationship. Staff respect young people's privacy and young people have keys for their room. Staff securely store young peoples' files and appropriately maintain confidentiality.

Young people report that they can discuss their concerns with 'any person on shift'. The home has a comprehensive complaints procedure. There is an acknowledgement that young people may prefer contacting external agencies with their grievances. The home provides a list of local personnel and national organisations, which includes Ofsted. Young people also discuss any issues in their residents' meetings. Since the last inspection a young person has made a complaint. This was not substantiated. As this complaint was linked to an incident, staff did not record this information in the complaint log. Regulations require that staff record any complaint, the action taken and the outcome of the investigation. This information was not clearly identifiable in the home's records.

Young people benefit from staff having a good understanding of safeguarding. This includes personal safety, friendships, emotional well-being and the home environment. Staff demonstrate a commitment to their duty of care. Staff receive regular training in safeguarding and other topics related to protecting young people. The strong links with the local authority and universities enables staff to benefit from training and good practice guidance. Young people state they get on well with each other and there are no issues with bullying. Staff follow a robust procedure when young people are absent without authority. Usually staff know where young people are and keep in touch via their mobile phone.

The home's ethos focuses on young people's strengths. Staff work consistently to build up trust and develop a positive, encouraging relationship with young people. The home rarely uses sanctions or restraints. Instead staff endeavour to help young people to mature and take responsibility for their actions. There are consistent discussions regarding socially acceptable behaviour. Staff believe young people can change and provide ongoing support to help young people achieve their goals. Examples of this support are helping young people with their course applications and curriculum vitae.

Young people describe staff as 'very supportive' and 'encouraging'. Young people appreciate the consistent assistance they receive to make positive changes in their lives. Some young people are making exceptional progress with an excellent change in their behaviour. Some young people are demonstrating great maturity and self determination. This contributes to realistic career plans and hopes for the future.

Staff take positive steps to keep young people safe from the inherent risk of fire and other hazards. Certificates confirm the safety of the gas and electrical supplies, the electrical and fire safety equipment. Staff undertake daily health and safety checks. There are good fire safety arrangements. Staff undertake weekly fire alarm tests and young people participate in drills. Prior to admission, staff request a copy of a current risk assessment. Staff also ensure they produce their own assessment to effectively safeguard each young person.

Young people benefit from a very stable, experienced and committed staff team. The majority of staff have worked at the home for 10 years. The organisation has a robust recruitment procedure, should there be a need to employ further staff. Staff encourage positive friendships. Young people are able to entertain their friends at home, for example enjoying a meal together or watching television in the lounge. Staff maintain a record of all visitors. Staff also ensure visitors do not have unsupervised access to other 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/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
16	maintain a record of all complaints made by young people, the actions taken and the outcome. (Regulation 24 (5))	01/03/2011