

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Mick Earl
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Date of last inspection	23/12/2010
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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 a detached house with gardens at the front and back and provides care for up-to-three young people.

On the ground floor, there is a kitchen and breakfast room, living room, quiet room and music room. On the first floor, there are three bedrooms and each young person has their own single room. There is also a staff sleep-in room, which acts as the office.

There is a bathroom and toilet also on this floor. On the second floor of the house, there is an attic room for hobbies and activities.

There is access to the town centre where there are shops, leisure and transport facilities.

There were two children present who helped with this inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

The purpose of the visit to the home was to carry out an unannounced inspection to inspect the key national minimum standards. Overall this home is judged as satisfactory.

National minimum standards were sampled in all outcome areas and identified the home has good strengths. These are in promoting young people's health; providing privacy and confidentiality for young people; supporting young people's education; involving young people and obtaining their views; providing a wide range of activities and social outings; providing comfortable accommodation and good individual support.

There are areas for improvement and these include; ensuring that detailed and current risk assessments are in place for all hazards and activities; ensuring all staff receive the right amount of supervision; having a development plan for the home available; undertaking robust and detailed monthly monitoring of the home's records and fully recording sanctions.

Improvements since the last inspection

The actions raised at the last inspection concerning consultation and regular fire safety checks and tests have been met.

The three recommendations in connection with the in-house safeguarding procedure, young people's health care plans and information in the Statement of Purpose have all been addressed.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The home has the appropriate policies and procedures in place to provide good health care to young people.

The food provided for young people is of a good quality and variety. There are good systems to record the food that young people have and menus demonstrate a diet that is balanced, healthy and nutritious. This means that young people's food intake and diet is well monitored by staff.

The records show that young people's health needs are well met, and when appropriate they are given advice, guidance and support on a range of health matters. This helps the young people to stay healthy. The records show that young people's health assessments are taking place.

Staff have undertaken training in the safe administration of medication and first aid. Staff say that specialist training in connection with young people's individual needs is available, as required, so young people are better protected if they have an accident or are unwell.

Systems for safe handling and administration of medication are in place. The systems work effectively and the records are audited to check that the right amounts of medication are still available in the home.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The arrangements in place to promote young people's safety and welfare are appropriate.

Young people are able to have the privacy they need when they need it. They have ready access to make and receive telephone calls in private. Any room searches, if ever necessary, are conducted properly. Young people are able to raise formal complaints and to raise issues with external agencies. However all issues are dealt with quickly and effectively by the staff at an informal level.

All the staff have received training in safeguarding young people and they are knowledgeable about how to respond to allegations, suspicions or evidence of abuse. Bullying is not evident in the home and staff are aware of how to respond should this arise. The staff also respond appropriately should any young person fail to return to

the home on time.

The staff encourage positive behaviour by preferring to use rewards rather than punishments. Sanctions are not used very often. However, some of the records do not provide enough detail to show that the sanction given was necessary or fair. There was also one sanction described in the daily recording that was not evident in the sanctions log. The use of physical intervention is also rare and has not been used for over three years. Staff receive appropriate training should this ever be needed.

The premises are kept safe. The regular servicing of the electrical equipment, gas appliances and fire safety equipment is carried out by suitably qualified people. The staff complete the fire safety checks and tests at the right times. This helps to promote the safety of people in the home. The risk assessment of any hazards in the home did not cover all areas of the building. The risk assessments for individual activities specific to the home have not been reviewed and updated for a number of years. Therefore do not include current information to make sure that young people are safe both in and outside of the home. Suitable arrangements are in place to ensure that new staff recruited to work with young people are appropriate.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young people receive the individual guidance and support that they need. Each young person is allocated a key worker who takes responsibility for making sure that their identified needs are met.

Young people living at the home have an education placement and members of staff actively support, encourage and promote their attendance. Regular attendance helps to promote the self esteem and life chances of young people. The individual needs of the young people living at the home are well met by staff who provide high levels of individual support. Young people have access to educational materials both at the home and via local community facilities. Staff liaise with educational professionals establishing good communication so they can provide support, help and advice to young people.

The home provides a range of equipment, books and toys and the young people are involved in trips, sports and activities. There are many opportunities for young people to experience outdoor activities and they are able to enjoy trips away to a caravan and holiday home owned by the provider.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young people's needs are assessed and documented within their care plan and other supporting documents. These outline what the young person's needs are and how they will be met. Staff are clear about the specific care they provide to young people

and show an understanding of the young people's needs.

Young people are able to attend their care reviews. The records show these take place at the right times and minutes from reviews are held on case files. This ensures young people's progress is being monitored.

The arrangements for contact between young people and their families and friends is clearly recorded on admission and regularly reviewed. Contact is supported by the staff team and records are kept to show that young people are able to maintain links with their family and friends.

Young people receive good support and encouragement to make decisions about their lives and the running of the home. There are positive relationships and good communication between young people and the staff. This is evident in the way young people and staff discuss the day's events and planned appointments.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Staff work hard to assist young people to prepare for adulthood and there are satisfactory arrangements for providing young people with the support they will need. The procedure for young people to move into the home is carried out with sensitivity and care, and is able to be tailored to the young person's needs. Staff make sure that, where appropriate, there is a pathway plan in place for the young person. This details the support and assistance young people will receive when they move out of the home. Staff can develop plans to include more detail to meet the individual needs of the young person. Young people are encouraged to be involved with decisions about their lives and to help with the practical running of the home.

The young people benefit from living in comfortable and homely accommodation. The general standard of repair, décor and furnishing is very good. Young people have their own bedroom which they can personalise if they wish.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The young people receive an individual service, designed to meet their personal needs and preferences. Staff knowledge of each young person is good and they try to make sure their needs are being met at all times.

The home has an appropriate Statement of Purpose that provides information about how it operates and there is a young people's guide that provides a useful introduction to the home. Both documents have been reviewed and updated in January 2011.

The records show that most members of staff receive the right amount of formal supervision each month. However the records available could not confirm that the manager and a new member of staff working in the home were receiving regular supervision. This is needed to confirm that the work of all members of staff is being monitored, and that staff are looking after young people in a safe way.

There are satisfactory arrangements for providing staff with training in caring for children and young people. All of the permanent care staff have a suitable qualification, confirming that they have the competencies needed to care for young people. Apart from core training, such as emergency first aid and positive behaviour management, staff can also access short courses, that cover the specific needs of young people. However the records do not confirm that all staff have received six paid days training per year.

Staffing levels are satisfactory and enable staff to spend time meeting the individual needs of the young people. The service employs a pool of staff, who provide cover at the home. This helps to maintain continuity of staffing and reduces potential disruption to the young people.

The arrangements for the internal and external monitoring of the home and the care and welfare of the young people is satisfactory although there are some shortfalls. The manager monitors, compiles and forwards to the Responsible Individual the home's records and statistics, to identify any patterns or issues requiring action. The monitoring forms show that the home's records have been looked at but there is no evidence of any evaluation of the statistics. The forms are not dated which means that, as current and past records are held together, it is not possible to know which year the forms relate to. In addition there is no annual development plan available in the home.

Young people's case files are properly kept and the records of their needs, development and progress reflects each young person's individuality.

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
26	ensure that robust risk assessments are carried out, to ensure that all parts of the home are free from hazards to young people's safety (Regulation 23 (a))	25/04/2011
26	ensure that robust risk assessments are carried out, to ensure	25/04/2011

	that any activities in which children participate in are free from avoidable risks (Regulation 23 (b))	
28	ensure that records show that all staff receive appropriate supervision including the manager, and fortnightly supervision for new members of staff (Regulation 27 (4) (a))	11/04/2011
33	ensure the home's system for monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6 is completed in a robust and detailed manner (Regulation 34 (1) (1))	18/04/2011
22	maintain an accurate and up-to-date record of measures of control used and ensure that all sanctions are recorded in the appropriate logbook (Regulation 17 (4))	04/04/2011
33	ensure that a report of the home's development plan is available. (Regulation 34 (2))	09/05/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the records provide enough detail to show that sanctions given are not excessive or unreasonable (NMS 22)
- ensure that records show that all staff receive at least 6 paid days of training per year (NMS 31.4)