

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	1 March 2010
Inspector	Jacqueline Dunster
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	3 August 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 family house located within an established residential community. It is within easy distance of recreational, educational and health facilities.

The communal areas of the home include a lounge/diner, kitchen, bathroom and a garden. Each young person has their own bedroom. There is a staff sleeping-in room which is also the staff office.

The home offers services and care for up to two young people from 10 to under 18 years of age with emotional or behavioural difficulties. It is part of a large organisation operating a number of children's homes.

Two young people currently live in the home and were present during the inspection.

Summary

During this interim inspection which was unannounced, all key standards relating to keeping children safe were inspected. The inspection assessed progress on one recommendation imposed following the last inspection.

The home continues to be judged as good overall. The staff understand the importance of keeping young people safe from harm inside and outside the home. The staff successfully implement policies and procedures to meet this goal. Staff in the home continue to support and care for young people effectively.

The home has some shortfalls relating to fire management which must be addressed to increase fire safety in the home. The home has not yet fully implemented a previous recommendation to offer young people the opportunity to sign their placement plans.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last key inspection, the home was recommended to ensure young people are given the opportunity to sign their placement plan. This has been only partially achieved. As a result, not all young people sign their plan to demonstrate they understand what it includes. As a consequence, the home may fail to fully engage young people in meeting the goals in their plans.

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.

The home has policies and procedures in place, including those for the selection and vetting of staff. These policies and procedures are designed to protect young people from bullying

and abuse and to ensure respect for their privacy and dignity. Staff implement them effectively to keep young people safe and secure.

The home has not undertaken a night time fire drill within the past year. Therefore, staff cannot feel confident that the home can be successfully evacuated during the night. On occasions, the fire equipment checks are not completed weekly as required by the home's policies. This could increase risks in the event of a fire. Otherwise, the home controls environmental hazards and fire risks in a way which keeps young people safe.

The home promotes positive relationships between staff and young people which encourage young people to raise their concerns or opinions without delay. This allows issues to be dealt with quickly, informally and effectively. As a result, young people can feel confident their concerns and opinions will be listened to and changes made if necessary.

The home has procedures in place relating to young people leaving the home without permission which staff implement appropriately. The home's staff demonstrate tenacity in their efforts to safeguard young people who go absent even where they have little cooperation from other agencies. They work hard to understand the reasons young people leave without permission. The home has had some success in breaking patterns of absence and engaging young people effectively in the home.

The staff use reward and praise to help young people to develop acceptable behaviour. Sanctions are limited and physical interventions have not been used recently. Young people are usually satisfied that sanctions are appropriate and they understand the consequences of their behaviour. In this way, the home is able to support young people to develop acceptable behaviour and respect for others.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Not all young people sign their placement plan to demonstrate they know what it says. This may reduce the likelihood of young people cooperating with plans during their time at the home.

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

Standard	Action	Due date
26	ensure there are adequate arrangements for testing fire equipment at regular intervals. (Regulation 32(1)(c)(v))	26 February 2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure a fire drill is held at night in a 12 month period (National Minimum Standard 26.8)
- ensure young people in the home are offered the opportunity to sign their placement plan to demonstrate they know the content of the plan. (National Minimum Standard 2.6)