

Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC008490       |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 23 August 2010 |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Bill Drumm     |
| <b>Type of Inspection</b>      | Key            |

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 19 January 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 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**

Care and accommodation is provided at the home for up to four young people aged from 9 years old up to 17 years old. The home is a detached bungalow with an enclosed rear garden. The home comprises of a kitchen, dining room, lounge, another room used for doing school work or relaxing. There are four bedrooms and two family sized bathrooms. There are a further two rooms, which are used by members of staff as office space and sleeping accommodation. Each young person has their own single bedroom.

The home is close to local shops. Bus routes are nearby if young people wish to visit nearby towns with their larger shops, cinemas and leisure facilities.

### **Summary**

This was an unannounced key inspection of the home. All of the outcome areas for young people were inspected and were found to be good. Overall, this is a good service.

Members of staff care about the young people who live there and treat them with dignity and respect. In addition members of staff are fully committed in supporting them to achieve their maximum potential and to develop socially acceptable behaviour. Young people were observed to have a friendly, open and honest dialogue with members of staff and appeared comfortable in approaching them with their concerns.

Members of the staff team are knowledgeable, skilled and committed to delivering a high quality service to young people. Monitoring processes are thorough and ensure high standards are maintained, with any shortfalls addressed quickly to improve provision to children. There are clear systems and procedures for keeping young people safe and for their health and welfare to be promoted and their needs met. Young people and members of staff actively share ideas about what the home does and how high standards and quality can be maintained. When asked what the home is good at doing one young person said, 'helping people.'

Three young people currently live at the home, all of whom spoke with the inspector and contributed to the inspection process.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection the manager has improved the quality of the written information gathered following the restraint or holding of a young person.

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Members of staff ensure young people have easy access to fresh fruit and vegetables. A well stocked fruit bowl is freely available in the kitchen and young people are encouraged to help themselves. Nutritious meals are provided and young people participate in the planning of menus. In addition, young people are encouraged to participate in shopping for food items. The home ensures that young people living there are able to follow the diet of their choice.

One young person said, 'they have a menu which each young person chooses and they encourage us to eat a healthy balanced diet. We're encouraged to eat fruit as snacks'. The home also ensures that young people are able to sample food from different countries and cultures. Young people living at the home enjoy a healthy, well-balanced diet and healthy eating is promoted.

Young people living at the home have had their individual health care needs fully identified and reviewed. Each young person has a comprehensive healthcare plan which outlines what their physical and emotional needs are and what support they may need. Young people are actively supported and encouraged to attend all meetings and appointments with healthcare professionals. Members of staff have all attended first aid training. The healthcare needs of young people are promoted.

Policies and procedures relating to the safe handling and administration of medication are in place. However, the policies and procedures do not take full account of specific safeguards that are necessary when handling and administering controlled drugs. All members of staff have undertaken training in the safe handling and administration of medication. An audit of the home's administration records was undertaken during the inspection and was found to be accurate and up to date. Young people living at the home are not fully protected by the home's medication administration systems.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Members of staff are pleasant and friendly towards all the young people living at the home. There are sufficient bathrooms and toilets to meet the needs of the young people living at the home. Each young person has his or her own bedroom. Young people are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms in a style of their own choice and to keep the rooms clean and tidy. The home has policies and procedures in place, which explain what action members of staff should take when it is necessary to search a young person's bedroom. Personal information relating to each young person is stored securely to prevent unauthorised access. Young people living at the home are treated with dignity and respect.

There are policies and procedures in place for dealing with complaints in an effective and timely manner. There have been eighteen complaints made by young people living at the home since the last inspection. All of the complaints have been fully investigated and the young people informed of the outcome. The young people's guide provides clear information to young people about the complaints process. In addition, each young person has easy access to independent advocacy services who may help them if they are unhappy about something. Young people were observed at the time of the inspection to speak freely with all members of staff and to make their needs known. However, not all members of staff have received training in the complaints process. Any concerns a young person may have about living at the home may not be fully addressed.

Young people living at the home are fully protected from exploitation and abuse. A copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures is available in the home. There has been one child protection referral made since the last inspection, which related to an allegation a young person about a member of staff. The member of staff no longer works at the home and the young person was safeguarded. All members of staff working at the home have undertaken training in child protection and the welfare of young people is promoted.

The home has policies and procedures in place with regard to countering bullying. There have been a small number of incidents of bullying since the last inspection. Records show that these were taken very seriously, the incidents investigated and appropriate action was quickly taken. The young people's guide to the home includes clear information for young people about what action they should take if they feel they are being targeted by bullies. Information about independent agencies that can help young people, if they feel they are being bullied, is available within the home. One young person who completed an inspection questionnaire said, 'I have been bullied. I told an adult and they told them off'. Another young person said, 'when children get bullied the home talk about it'. Not all members of staff working at the home have received training in countering bullying, young people may not therefore be fully protected from bullying.

The home has policies and procedures in place with regard to what action members of staff should take if a young person is absent without authority. Procedures comply with national minimum standards (NMS). There have been a number of occasions since the last inspection when young people have been absent without authority. The unauthorised absence of young people from the home is taken very seriously. Members of staff make every effort to search for the young person and to ensure their safety. Young people are responded to positively on their return.

The home has policies and procedures in place relating to the safe holding or restraint of young people, and members of staff have received appropriate training. Restraint records are retained within a separate bound and numbered book used specifically for that purpose. There have been a number of restraints used within the home since the last inspection. Written records have been completed fully and a copy placed on each young person's file. The home also has policies and procedures in place, which relate to the sanctions members of staff are permitted to use to help young people modify their behaviour. However, a list of permissible sanctions was not included in the procedures. Members of staff may not therefore use appropriate sanctions to help a young person develop socially acceptable behaviour.

Young people are protected from fire and other hazards within the home. There are good systems in place to ensure that young people, members of staff and visitors to the home are kept safe and free from hazards. Fire drills are carried out at regular intervals and these include some undertaken at night. Risk assessments are undertaken on the known and likely activities carried out by young people. These risk assessments are thorough and help to protect young people from the risk of accident or injury.

There have been a number of new appointments to the staff team at the home since the last inspection. Written records show that thorough and detailed checks are carried out to ensure that successful applicants are suitable to work with young people. A programme of induction has been arranged for all new members of staff, which includes relevant training opportunities. Members of staff working at the home provide high quality care and support to the young people living there. Young people living at the home are provided with physical safety and security and are protected from being exposed to potential abusers.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Young people living at the home receive individual help and support quickly when they need it or when they request it. Young people have their own key worker. Meetings between key workers and young people take place at frequent intervals. One member of staff said, 'we give

lots of praise and encouragement everyday, we want the children to be happy and to move forward'. The progress of each young person is regularly monitored and strategies to help them improve their behaviour are regularly reviewed and updated.

All the young people living at the home attend school. The home has a proactive approach to helping young people progress with their education and to achieve their maximum potential. When asked whether they were given enough help with school work one young person said, 'yes, all that's needed to support me through school. I'm finding it very useful, I enjoy working to get somewhere'. In addition, young people living at the home are actively encouraged and supported to develop their own hobbies and interests. One member of staff said, 'all young people are treated individually and their hobbies and interests are encouraged'.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Young people living at the home are appropriately placed. Planning and placement meetings take place prior to the admission of any young person to the home. Meetings held prior to admission help to ensure all essential information is available and that the placement has the greatest chance of success. Each young person has their own placement plan, which outlines what their needs are and how they will be met. In order to help ensure that needs are met, the manager and members of staff undertake individual risk assessments of each young person and devise more detailed care plans following admissions.

The needs of young people living at the home are regularly reviewed and care services adapted to meet changing needs. The manager and members of staff regularly attend review meetings with partner agencies, and strategies are developed to help meet identified needs quickly.

Contact with friends and family is discussed at each young person's planning meeting, prior to admission. Where appropriate, young people are supported and encouraged to maintain regular contact with their friends and families. Restrictions on contact between young people and their families are discussed prior to admission. The reasons for these restrictions are both known and understood by the manager and staff at the home.

The admissions procedure for the home is very comprehensive and thorough. Where appropriate, arrangements are made for the young person and their parents to visit the home before a placement is agreed. Members of staff work extremely hard to try to make young people feel welcome and to understand what it will be like to live there.

Young people are encouraged to raise issues, which affect their lives. Regular meetings take place between members of staff and young people about how the home is run and what improvements can be made. One staff member who returned a questionnaire said, 'all young people are informed how the home is run and can voice opinions how and when they please'. All young people who returned inspection questionnaires said that they were able to make their views known and to have a say in what happens in the home.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

At the time of the inspection, no young people living at the home were eligible to have a pathway plan. However, the manager and members of staff encourage and support young people to take responsibility for their actions and to develop adult responsibilities.

Young people enjoy homely accommodation that is decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard. Members of staff help to maintain the building and to keep it clean and tidy. Young people living at the home are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms and are encouraged to keep their home clean and tidy.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Members of staff support and enable young people to participate in community-based activities on an equal basis and to develop their own identity. One young person said, 'the home's good at helping you understand life a bit more and helping you when you have a problem'.

The Statement of Purpose has recently been reviewed and accurately describes what young people can expect from living at the home. Young people know what services they can expect from the home.

Young people are looked after by members of staff who are very well supported and properly managed. All members of staff receive regular, formal supervision. The manager also makes herself available to talk with members of staff should they need to do so. Staff meetings are held at regular intervals. Members of staff spoken to said, 'the home has very positive staff who are friendly and communicate well, it's a positive atmosphere to work in' and 'the staff here are amazing to work with, offering help and giving advice to those that need it'.

Young people receive the care and services they need from competent staff. However, not all members of staff are trained to a minimum National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. The home's rotas ensure that, where possible, there is a mix of both male and female staff on duty. Staff sickness and holidays are covered by existing staff members being flexible in their work patterns. Consistency of care is provided to young people and there are clear arrangements in place for members of staff to deputise in the absence of the manager.

Not all new members of staff appointed to work at the home have attended training in complaints or countering bullying. A record of all training received by members of staff is maintained within the home. Young people are looked after by members of staff who are generally well trained and competent to meet their needs.

The care of young people living at the home is monitored regularly. A system is in place to ensure performance is monitored and any patterns or issues requiring action are highlighted.

The needs of young people are recorded to reflect their individuality and daily records are maintained. Information relating to the care that young people receive is stored securely. Young people and their parents are able to access this information within the home if they request it.

## 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 |
|----------|--------|----------|
|----------|--------|----------|

### Recommendations

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

- review the home's procedures for the management and administration of medication (NMS 13)
- review the home's behaviour management procedures to clearly identify the permissible measures of control allowed within the home (NMS 22.2)
- ensure all members of staff working at the home have received training in countering bullying and complaints (NMS 31.1)
- ensure that a minimum ratio of 80% of all care staff have completed their Level 3 in the Caring for Children and Young People NVQ. (NMS 29.5)