

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	9 September 2009
Inspector	Mark Kersh
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	18 March 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

This is a residential children's home owned and run by a charitable trust that has other children's residential services in the area. The house is a five bedroom bungalow, in a residential area. There is a lounge, with satellite television, a dining area, computer, kitchen, and toilet and bathroom facilities. The garden has a soft play area and sensory features. All areas of this home are adapted for wheelchair use. The home provides residential care for up to five young people, who have a physical and or learning disability, who are placed by their own Local Authority.

Summary

At this unannounced full inspection, all key standards were inspected, standard six, preparation for leaving care, was not inspected. This is an outstanding service and has substantial strengths in all outcome areas. Young people's health is promoted through balanced diets, healthy eating and regular exercise. Young people are safeguarded thorough policies and procedures understood and followed by trained staff. Staff are committed to providing an excellent level of care and support in line with young people's individual needs, and their privacy and dignity is respected at all times. Written plans have a person centred approach and parents and placing social workers actively contribute to them. There is very good monitoring to evaluate and sustain the high quality of care in the home. The promotion of equality and diversity is evident across all outcome areas. Staff receive excellent opportunities and support from the manager, who has a strong commitment and focus on achieving high standards.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were no actions or recommendations made at the last inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Young people take part in the planning of menus and accompany staff during the weekly shop, they are encouraged and supported to identify foods that are healthy and good for them. Meals are cooked using fresh produce and the record of menus show a balanced healthy diet is promoted. Staff are trained in food hygiene and are competent in providing young people with nutrition who require gastric feeds. Young people's likes and dislikes of food are recorded and it is evident parents actively contribute to health plans and are kept well informed of young people's food intake and of the exercise they participate in. Young people are able to make choices through excellent pictorial displays within the kitchen and staff are able to communicate well with young people through sign language. Meals are provided which take into account young people's diverse needs and they experience foods from other cultures, through themed nights and eating out at restaurants.

Young people access routine health appointments and, specialist advice and guidance is sought to meet particular individual health needs, for example, speech and language therapy. Young people's health plans are detailed and provide staff with an excellent understanding of past and current health matters. Staff are trained in specific health areas which enable them to fully understand particular health issues and they respond to young people's individual health needs

in line with good parenting. Utmost priority is given to keeping young people's parents and placing social workers informed of any changes in young people's health needs. Health plans show consent and contributions from parents and placing social workers, and these plans are routinely updated.

Young people are protected by trained staff who follow a very effective medication policy. Staff fully understand and follow the procedures for the storage, administration, recording and disposal of all medication. There are excellent systems in place which focus on safety and ensure all medication in the home is accountable. Young people do not have access to medication which is stored securely. All staff are trained in the use of first aid and are able to respond promptly to any accident or illness, before professional advice is sought.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Young people's right to privacy is maintained as all written information in respect of them is correctly stored in secure lockable facilities. Staff demonstrate well their responsibility to uphold confidentiality and are professional when sharing confidential information and records with other professionals and parents. Staff protect young people's rights to dignity and privacy, exceedingly well, when supporting them with personal care.

Young people's welfare is promoted by a clear complaints policy which is explained to them in pictorial formats, inspiring systems assist young people to choose particular symbols, should they have a concern about the home. There have been no complaints made by young people or professionals about the care the home provides, and good relationships with parents ensure any issues are discussed and acted on promptly.

There is an excellent focus on safeguarding and protection issues with staff having completed advance child protection training and safeguarding young people with a disability. Good leadership from the management team consistently promotes an environment where safety is important for young people. Young people are protected from potential harm and neglect as staff have an excellent understanding of the operational policies and procedures and are aware of their role and responsibilities. There have been no issues in relation to child protection, bullying or unauthorised absences, and staff know which appropriate authorities to contact should a significant event occur.

Young people have individual behaviour management plans which consider the age, disability, understanding and ability of young people. Staff are trained and highly skilled in behaviour management and know young people's moods well, they follow strategies, such as calming techniques or music therapy to encourage appropriate behaviour. Parents and placing social workers contribute to behaviour management plans, and strategies to modify behaviour are agreed and used during visits home and school, which provides young people with a consistent approach. Sanctions are not imposed and restraint is rarely used, merely to guide young people away from situations or disagreements.

Comprehensive written risk assessments are in place for individual young people and for the group in relation to their preferred activities and outings, all risks are assessed as low. Young people, staff and visitors are protected by the procedures staff follow for fire safety and evacuation. All visitors to the home are advised of evacuation exits and assembly points. All the required fire safety checks are completed at regular intervals and evacuations include staff

and young people, evacuation test are also carried out with the two adapted vehicles the home uses to transport young people. Specialist lifting equipment is checked and serviced as required.

All staff have been appropriately recruited and undergone suitable Criminal Records Bureau checks to ensure that they are suitable to work with young people. The home operates a signing in and out book, visitors do not have unsupervised access to young people.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Young people receive excellent support that meets their individual needs. Staff demonstrate well their understanding of the routines and needs of young people, these give a good account of their diverse needs and are maintained in detail within individual plans. Young people are not excluded from anything as a result of their disability and are encouraged and supported to participate in all daily living tasks. Staff confirm any instances where knowledge is lacking, they access outside professional agencies for support and guidance, and there is a good range of information available to staff and young people in relation to this. Key workers take responsibility for ensuring young people's needs are met consistently and address health, social, leisure and sexual issues sensitively.

Young people's education and attendance is fully supported by staff and there is excellent communication with teaching staff and parents. Young people have access within the home to educational aids, arts and craft and a computer which is fully accessible, with appropriate educational software and adapted for use. Staff emotionally reinforce young people when they make a positive effort and do well, and celebrate their achievements and display certificates awarded.

Young people are able to pursue their own interests and hobbies as well as join in with group activities. These needs are met through a variety of arrangements made for them by staff, all of which are supervised by those trained to do so, such as bike riding, swimming and horse riding. Young people enjoy holidays with their family and staff and the preparation for this is rigorous although carried out at a pace suitable to allow young people to adjust and adapt to change. For example, excellent work has been undertaken to prepare a young person for their first flight and enjoy a family holiday abroad. Project work linked to outcomes, such as, being healthy and enjoying and achieving are undertaken by young people with staff. These focus on specific activities and outings and are linked to individual direct work plans. Young people have a memory box filled with photographs, activities they participate in, and achievements and awards, these feature regularly during key worker sessions and are an excellent way of providing young people and parents with positive memories of their time spent living in this home.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Young people have their needs thoroughly assessed, planned for and reviewed effectively by staff. All written information and plans is current, informative and clear. Detailed plans address any needs arising from disability, ethnicity, race, gender, faith or belief and demonstrate well the appropriate external support young people receive. Young people are consulted and their views listened to by staff who use a range of varied and imaginative methods, including pictorial cards and symbols, music therapy, objects and on occasions an electronic communication device.

Excellent consultation takes place with parents and placing social workers, both in verbal and written form, all of which enhances the outstanding care young people receive.

The home encourages an open door policy, with safeguarding measures in place. Therefore young people's arrangements for contact are excellent. Parents are very welcomed into the home and visit frequently and placing social workers visit young people regularly. There are no issues in relation to contact and plans are reviewed and changed when necessary.

The homes admission and discharge policy ensures very well planned admissions into the home, and takes into account all of the views of young people, parents and placing social workers. Careful consideration is given to any likely impact an admission may have on the existing group, and equally any impact on the young person being admitted. For young people leaving the home, plans are formulated with adult services to ensure the best suited placement is secured. There have been no admissions or discharges following the previous inspection.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

The home is situated within a local community. The interior and exterior of the home are maintained in a very good state of structural and decorative repair. There is a good maintenance and repair programme for the building, furniture and equipment, and any damage is repaired promptly. The home is kept clean and there are homely touches throughout. The garden is well maintained, fully accessible for wheelchair use and safe. It has a very good range of adapted play and sensory features. Access to, and within the home is very good. It is enhanced through the fitting of an electronic door operating system which assists movement and access without compromising privacy. All door frames are fitted with finger safe guards. Accessibility to many facilities in the home is aided through the use of rise and fall equipment, such as, worktops, sinks and baths. These facilities enable young people to take part in and learn daily living skills. Young people's bedrooms are designed and equipped to meet their specific needs.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. This is achieved through the exceptional contribution the home makes to ensuring young peoples diverse needs are met. The statement of purpose and children's guide makes clear the home's commitment to equality and diversity, and all staff have received training in respect of this. Training has been completed in communication techniques through signing and pictorials and enables staff to effectively communicate with young people. Young people, parents and placing social workers actively contribute to written plans all of which seek a person centred approach of care. Young people are made aware and celebrate the festivities of their own and other communities.

Young people clearly benefit from the excellent leadership provided by the manager and management team to a well established team. Proactive systems ensure staff receive regular appropriate training and supervision, with their performance and personal development being appraised annually. Young people receive consistency and continuity from a stable staff team. The majority of staff have completed their National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 in the Caring for Children and Young People. In addition they undertake a wide range of training to meet the complex needs of the young people they care for.

The manager has a very effective system to monitor, report and evaluate the administration systems of the home, ensuring what staff record they record well. Robust quality assurance processes are regularly carried out by person's independent of the home, and any areas of weakness identified are promptly acted upon. These highly effective evaluations ensure the standards within the home, remain very high.

Young people's case file records and other written documentation is of a high standard. This facilitates good communication with other professionals as well as ensuring young people have a permanent and secure record of their history. Excellent cross referencing of all documentation enables the management team and staff to evaluate and monitor young people's progress.

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
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Recommendations

There are no recommendations.