

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspection date	29/03/2011
Inspector	Sharon Lewis
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	20/01/2011
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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 home provides education and residential care for up to 28 pupils, from 8 to 19 years of age who have severe and complex learning difficulties, associated with autism. All have communication difficulties, a number have additional impairments and all exhibit challenging behaviour to varying degrees. The home operates as a charitable trust, and being a school as well, it is approved by the Department for Education. Some of the children are accommodated in the main house, which is organised into three residential units. There are four additional units for older pupils, three inside the grounds and one a short walk from the main site. The home has extensive grounds that are well used for horticulture and animal management, as well as leisure activities. It has its own indoor swimming pool.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This interim inspection focused on the outcome area related to safety. It also evaluated the progress the setting has made to address the recommendations made at the last inspection. Young people receive a very good service with outstanding features. Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to promoting excellence and reflective practice. There are no breaches of the regulations. As this was a random inspection, the judgement from the key inspection is not changed.

Improvements since the last inspection

The home has made good progress with addressing the five recommendations from the last inspection. There is a culture of self evaluation and a wish to promote best practice. The involvement of the staff teams in formulating solutions to the identified recommendations, is an excellent example of this.

Staff handovers better reflect the quality of care. It is the expectation that staff read accompanying documentation to complement information shared at the handover. Specific handover records contain meaningful entries, which highlight young people's strengths, moods and needs. Staff are aware of the need to celebrate the young person's day and pass on relevant information.

Young people now benefit from increased opportunities that prepare them for adult life. The implementation of extended evening leisure time enables young people to explore their surroundings and develop their skills. Tea time is an hour later allowing young people to pursue their hobbies, interests and have an evening social life. Examples are young people attending Brownies, having meals out and going to the cinema. This provides them with fulfilling and realistic experiences similar to their

peer group.

Young people's individual risk assessments highlight the potential risks regarding security and safety. They also demonstrated the need for night time observations of young people. The senior leadership team demonstrate a strong commitment to their 'duty of care'. The review of risk assessments take account of practices which could be perceived as restricting the liberty of young people.

The safeguarding of young people now has an even greater profile. Recent briefings highlight the holistic perspective of child protection. Staff are now aware of the external agencies and their contact details. Information is on display to guide them through the relevant procedure.

Young people live within a home where the service is continually adapted to meet their needs. The home's development plan is in progress. The organisation is currently working with the British Institute of Learning Disabilities to undertake a quality assurance review. Obtaining the views of young people is a key part of this process. This will complement the development plan, which also includes collating the views of parents and stakeholders.

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 reside in a home which is committed to safeguarding their welfare. The care philosophy focuses on valuing each individual and helping them to lead a fulfilling life. Staff empower young people to make choices and respect their privacy and dignity. Changes to the external website further highlights the home's commitment to promoting anti-discriminatory practice. Staff securely store young people's files and maintain confidentiality.

The high staffing ratio ensures young people do not experience bullying. It also contributes to young people not having the opportunity to be absent without authority. There is a very clear complaints procedure. Currently there is an ongoing issue with a neighbour, this is being addressed through the correct channels. The home continues to receive compliments from external parties. This includes parents, social workers and other young people involved in advocacy organisations.

The home understands the importance of safeguarding young people and has a specialist team dedicated to this work. Regular training is available for the whole staff team. Safeguarding forms part of staff induction and the initial interview process. Young people's assessments detail individual safeguarding concerns. The

good links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board ensure allegations are managed in a robust manner.

Young people benefit from the home having a dedicated behaviour management team. Staff successfully manage young people's challenging needs. The high staffing ratio enables young people to have individual support from one or two staff members. This provides a very good system for supporting young people when they are experiencing mood swings. Staff are able to effectively diffuse situations and divert their attention to another activity. Young people display a sense of peace and inner happiness in their surroundings. Staff do not sanction young people. Instead they use positive reinforcement to influence behaviour. A database monitors young people's challenging needs and any restraints. This assists with producing graphs and analysing this information to influence care practices.

Young people live within a safe environment. The home regularly updates risk assessments for all aspects of safety. These assessments comprehensively address daily routines, activities in the home and in the wider community. A member of the senior leadership team leads on health and safety matters. Documentation confirms the safety of the gas and electricity supply and fire equipment. Trained staff regularly verify the safety of portable appliances. Young people benefit from regular fire drills and tests. This familiarises them with the emergency procedures.

The vetting of staff is comprehensive. The home is highly selective. The recruitment of the right person for the job is more important than the filling of a vacancy. The home appropriately uses the disciplinary procedure to address concerns. The restructuring of staff and changes in the night staffing arrangements contribute to better outcomes for young people. Staff appropriately monitor all visitors and ensure they sign the visitors book.

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.