

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC013144
Inspection date	29 April 2010
Inspector	Christopher Garrett
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	12 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

A national charity owns and operates this children's home. Short break and respite care is provided for children and young people with disabilities up to the age of 18 years. The centre offers a range of services from day care to overnight and weekend stays. Up to six children and young people can be cared for overnight.

The home has previously undergone an extensive refurbishment programme and has been adapted and equipped to meet the needs of the children and young people. The accommodation consists of a number of single and double bedrooms, communal areas, hydrotherapy pool and sensory room and well-equipped bathroom facilities. To the rear of the property is a large secure garden which backs onto a local recreational area.

Summary

The purpose of this visit was to complete an unannounced interim inspection. This focused on evaluating the response made by the home to the actions raised following the last inspection on 12th January 2010. The home has been proactive and addressed one of the actions. Key standards relating to the safety and protection of the young people were also assessed along with two key standards in organisation. Outcomes for being healthy, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution, economic well-being were not looked at during this inspection.

An acting manager had been appointed to the home and took up the post on the 8th January 2010. The acting manager has identified and prioritised areas for future development and has assisted in responding to an action raised during the last inspection. The home continues to ensure that the safety of the children and young people takes high priority and their welfare is promoted. Good care practices are provided by trained staff who deliver consistent levels of care and safeguarding.

A previous action relating to the implementation of systems for reviewing the quality of care in the home has not been fully met. A further action has been raised regarding the registration of the acting manager

At the time of the inspection four children and young people were receiving respite care in the home.

The overall judgement is based on findings of the previous key inspection. No further evidence has been collected to suggest that this should be amended.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The home has reviewed and revised its arrangements for the supervision of staff. These ensure that the care staff receive regular and consistent supervision relating to their social care roles.

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.

There are established practices and procedures within the home that contribute to the safeguarding of the children and young people, promote their welfare and ensure that they live in a safe, secure and caring environment. Robust systems are in place for the home to obtain essential information about the children and young people. Staff make effective use of this to develop individual plans and risk assessments which ensures consistency and continuity of the children and young people's care, safety and management of behaviour.

The care staff follow practices that demonstrate a high respect for the children and young people's privacy. For example, staff are deployed in a manner which ensures that whilst all of the children and young people receive a high level of supervision that this is not delivered in an oppressive or invasive manner. Most of the children and young people require some level of personal care to be provided for them. Staff consult with parents on how personal care is provided and this is comprehensively and clearly recorded in individual profiles. There is an expectation that all of the care staff will deliver personal care. They are provided with guidance and are able to develop their skills and competency before they take on this responsibility. These arrangements ensure that the children and young people's personal care needs and any individual preferences and routines are catered for and that this is delivered with sensitivity and consistency by all of the care team.

A number of the children and young people receiving respite care at the home have little or no verbal communication. Consequently, the ability for some children and young people to register concerns or a complaint is extremely limited. Care staff develop a good understanding of the children and young people's individual means of communication. They effectively interpret when a child or young person has a concern or is feeling uncomfortable or unhappy and take appropriate remedial action to resolve this. Details of the home's complaints procedure is provided to stakeholders. There have been no recent complaints made to the home.

The home has good procedures in place that ensure the children and young people's welfare is promoted and that they are protected from abuse. Regular training is provided on child protection and safeguarding awareness. This ensures that care staff have the knowledge, understanding and skills required to respond to child protection concerns. Senior staff scrutinise and monitor records to identify any actual or potential safeguarding concerns. Care staff are fully aware of the procedures that are in place and demonstrate a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in responding to an allegation or suspicion of abuse.

The care staff are fully aware of the vulnerability of the children and young people living in the home. Staffing levels ensure that the children and young people are kept safe, receive appropriate support and are provided with high levels of supervision. The home provides a safe and secure environment. Individual behavioural risk assessments are routinely carried out. These review the possibility of the children and young people leaving the supervision of staff and the security of the home and, identify when their behaviour is known to be intimidating or unsettling for others. Staffing levels are adjusted and strategies implemented to manage any identified risk. Consideration is given to the mix of children and young people accessing the home. These arrangements help to protect the children and young people from bullying and from putting themselves in a vulnerable position and at risk. Although there have been no recent incidents, staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and the processes that need to be taken if a child

or young person goes missing from the home and/or absents themselves from the staff supervision.

Staff have a good understanding of the children and young people's behaviour. They recognise that a number of the children and young people are not fully accountable for their behaviour and have little or no understanding of the impact that this has on others. Children and young people who display behaviour that is upsetting to others, are moved away from the group and given time and encouragement to reflect on their behaviour. Care staff recognise, reward and reinforce good behaviour. This practice helps the children and young people to develop some level of understanding about behaviour that is acceptable, appropriate and sociable. There is infrequent use sanctions.

Some of the children and young can display aggressive and dangerous behaviour. Staff are aware that some children and young people use this to draw attention to their needs or to indicate when they are unhappy or upset. The home takes positive steps to ensure that staff develop the skills needed to manage this behaviour. All care staff are provided with regular training on the use of positive handling techniques, including the use of de-escalation and distraction techniques and the use of restraint. Staff are proactive and make effective use of their skills and training. There is limited use of physical intervention in the home. The management of behaviour is consistent throughout the care team.

The home takes positive steps to keep the children, young people, staff and visitors safe from the risk of fire. Established systems are in place for the regular checking and servicing of fire safety and detection equipment. A fire risk assessment is in place and has been reviewed and significant findings have been acted on. The children, young people and staff participate in practise evacuations. The home ensures that all of the care staff complete some level of fire awareness training. Personal emergency evacuation programmes are in place for each of the children and young people. These measures ensure the safety of the children and young people and, that those who require assistance in the case of an emergency are provided with appropriate support.

The home has a robust system in place for the recruitment and vetting of staff. Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks at an enhanced level are completed before staff take up their employment. There is a process for updating these CRB checks every three years. These measures are a contributory factor to the safeguarding of the children and young people and help to ensure that they are not cared by staff who are actual or potential abusers.

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 satisfactory.

The charity has appointed an acting manager who has day-to-day responsibility for the provision of care in the home. An application for registration of the acting manager has not been submitted to Ofsted as required by the Children's Homes Regulations 2001.

An action relating to the arrangements for reviewing the quality of care in the home is not fully met. The charity has undertaken an strategic review of its service with the local authority and the views of parents were sought as part of this process. The home has taken some steps to respond to some key themes that emerged as part of the consultation. The acting manager is considering ways to routinely consult with parents and other significant people, about the quality of care in the home at a local level, but these have not yet been implemented.

A systems for the monitoring of the performance of the home against its Statement of Purpose has been implemented. However, records of the checks completed were not available during the inspection.

No other key standards for this outcome were inspected on this occasion.

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
33	establish and maintain a system for improving the quality of care provided by the home (Regulation 34 (1) (b) (3))	30 June 2010
34	determine the fitness of the acting manager to to manage the home. (Regulation 8 (1) (2))	30 June 2010

Recommendations

There are no recommendations.