

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Paul Taylor
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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 is a registered service to accommodate a maximum of eight young people aged between 13 and 17 years on admission. Young people may remain in the home until they are 18 years of age. The young people accommodated are male only. The home is privately run and is one of three children's homes registered to the service providers. The home specialises in working with young people whose assessed needs are linked to sexually inappropriate behaviour. Young people engage in regular therapy which forms a key component of the therapeutic ethos of the setting. They are given an insight to these types of support during the initial stay, which lasts for up to 10 days.

The home is situated on the outskirts of a village with a range of facilities and amenities close by. Young people attend a school which is operated by the same organisation.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

At this unannounced inspection the key standards under staying safe were assessed together with how the home has addressed the two recommendations made at the last inspection.

The home continues to provide an outstanding level of care which ensures that the young people are nurtured and supported sensitively and diligently, enabling them to feel safe. Their risk taking behaviours are closely monitored and systems operated in the home promote their well-being to an excellent standard. The ethos of involving all the young people and adults in community meetings means that an atmosphere of open communication and no secrets is embedded in the home, promoting respect and safety for all those who live and work there. One young people reported 'we feel really safe, there's always someone to talk to.'

Two recommendations were made as a result of this inspection. The home has been asked to ensure that young people have the opportunity to record their views when they have been subject to a sanction. Additionally, the home has been asked to ensure that incidents of physical intervention are recorded in the restraints book and not in the incident book.

Improvements since the last inspection

The two recommendations made at the last inspection have been addressed. The manager now has a clear tracking sheet which records the reason supervision

sessions may have been missed. Additionally, the manager has a system which tracks and ensures that she has checked all the key areas which need to be monitored, such as complaints, sanctions, accidents and menus. She also endorses and dates the records when she has checked them.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Young people's privacy is promoted to an excellent standard. Very clear boundaries and routines are in place for members of staff and the young people to follow with regards to protecting privacy. This is especially embedded in messages to the young people about who can visit bedrooms and what process to follow when washing and changing. This practice takes into account that the young people are placed in the home due to the risk of sexually harmful behaviour.

The young people are aware of how to make a complaint and to whom they can do so. They all have access to external help lines if they wish to complain about their care to an independent organisation. Young people report that they have numerous members of staff to whom they can discuss any issues and that they feel listened to and taken seriously. The home has a strong culture whereby any person, child or adult, can call a community meeting to address any issue. This practice enables young people to voice their opinions and feelings before they become formal complaints. No complaints have been received since the last inspection. It is clear that the young people's opinions and feelings are respected to a very high standard.

All members of staff know what to do, and who to inform, if they have any concerns about a young person's well-being or conduct. Close liaison is maintained with the relevant child protection agencies who are informed of any issues or concerns. High levels of staff awareness of the young people's behaviours, underpinned with clear routines and boundaries, ensure that any potential incidents are addressed swiftly and robustly.

Young people report that bullying is not a problem in the home and that any issues or incidents are dealt with rigorously. The practice of calling community meetings means that any incidents or group dynamics can be openly discussed. This ensures that the young people are able, with peer group support which is supervised by adults, to voice if they feel they are being bullied or if they feel any other member of the community is being bullied. The culture of having no secrets and open community discussion ensures that bullying or negative behaviour is swiftly and effectively dealt with.

Very clear procedures are in place with regards to young people being missing from the home. These take into account the fact that the young people are living at the home having being involved in sexually harmful behaviour. The young people are aware that the police will be informed if they are absent without permission. 'It would be a big deal' was a comment made by a young person. Incidents of young people going missing or being out without permission are extremely rare.

Each young person has an individual behaviour management plan which outlines, in detail, what events and situations may trigger distressed or challenging behaviour, including sexually harmful behaviour and what strategies need to be used to manage these situations. Close staff support and supervision ensures that the young people are guided and encouraged to achieve excellent standards of behaviour.

Young people report that sanctions imposed are fair. On most occasions negative behaviour is dealt with via a community meeting, where the effects that this behaviour can have on the group and atmosphere in the home, are highlighted and then resolved. The record of sanctions is checked regularly by the manager and responsible individual to ensure that they are fair and appropriate. Young people have not been asked to write or have their views recorded in the sanctions record. They do have the opportunity to discuss sanctions imposed in group meetings as well as with their key worker or therapist.

All members of staff of staff have received training in the method of physical restraint used in the home. Recording of incidents of restraint is included in both incident reports and in the home's restraint record, which are both bound books. All the details required are contained in the books, which are checked and signed by both the Registered Manager and responsible individual.

Risk assessments are in place concerning the environment, activities, and behaviours which the young people may display. These are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that the measures to minimise risks are relevant and effective. High levels of awareness shown by the staff ensure that the safety of the young people is promoted to an excellent standard.

The fire system and equipment is checked on a regular basis. Fire drills are carried out routinely at different times of the day and night to ensure that the young people are familiar with evacuation procedures.

Access to the building is restricted and visitors to the home are supervised at all times after they have signed the visitors book.

The organisation operates a robust recruitment process which ensures that no member of staff begins to work at the home until all the necessary pre employment checks have been carried out.

The systems operated in the home, combined with staff experience and awareness, ensure that the safety of the young people is promoted and protected to an excellent standard. The well-being of the young people, both emotionally and physically is

seen as paramount and the young people themselves report that they feel very safe at the home.

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.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Recommendations

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

- ensure that all incidents which have involved the use of physical intervention are recorded in the restraints book. (NMS 22.9)
- give young people the opportunity to write or record their views and sign their names in the record of sanctions (NMS 22.14)