

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC013743
Inspection date	20 July 2009
Inspector	Cheryl Carter
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	4 November 2008
--------------------------------	-----------------

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Cripins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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 home offering placements to 19 children, 15 children with learning disabilities between the ages of five years and 18 years of age, and up to four places for children with a physical disability. It is split into four separate units, three of which offer residential services and one provides three places for respite care.

The home is located in a quiet village, it has an extensive playground for use by the children and security gates are fitted to the rear of the site. Limited parking is available.

Summary

This is a good service.

This was a key unannounced inspection. Children's welfare is enhanced by the policies and procedures in place and by the good relationships that exist between staff, children and their families. Children are encouraged to eat healthily and in line with their dietary requirements. The home works closely with a wide range of outside agencies to meet the full range of children's needs. Staff are well supported by the Registered Manager who is committed to promoting the welfare of children and focuses on developing the service to ensure that children receive the best quality service. There is a very strong commitment to promoting equality and diversity in this home.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

All the recommendations made at the previous inspection have been addressed and the deputy manager has now reviewed all the systems. The list of staff designated to administer medication has been updated. The systems for reporting complaints and recording restraints have been reviewed and updated and there is now a system in place to record children missing from the home.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Staff are very aware of the different dietary needs of children and detailed information is kept about each child's dietary needs and preferences. Meal plans suitable for the children are prepared. Consultation with a dietician makes sure that children are continuing to receive a healthy diet. Staff have completed their basic food hygiene training. A recent inspection by the Environmental Health Officer was good, no recommendations were made.

All children have individual development and health care plans. Evidence shows that staff accompany children to various medical appointments and maintain records of appointments. Completed health needs assessments and written health care plans of all children are included in their files. Support is given by staff for children to attend their doctors and dentist appointments and there is also a dentist who comes on site to see the children in the home. Hearing checks are also done in partnership with the school and reviewed at the Looked After Children's reviews.

Most of the staff have had medication training. The home has a medication administration policy and only staff who have completed the training are allowed to administer medication. The home keeps an up to date list of the names of staff approved to administer medication.

The home has accessed a new certificated training in the safe handling of medicines and 11 members of staff have undertaken this training. The manager feels that this training takes on board the environment and highlights the importance of the safe handling of medication. Eventually all of the staff team will undertake this training. First aid boxes are provided in the home and first aid training is on-going. The home is able to have a designated first aider on each shift.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff ensure that children's privacy and dignity is maintained at all times. Children have their own rooms, and staff will always knock on the door before entering. As part of the induction for staff the rights of the children are carefully considered and this enforces the fact that it is a children's home and the staff come to work there. The safeguarding training that staff undertake in their first six months of working in the home also enforces confidentiality. The home has a comprehensive policy on Data Protection and the organisation's code of conduct also ensure that information about children, their families and the organisation is handled within the guidelines of the policy.

Children's safety is a priority in this home and good practice is underpinned by the home's policies and procedures. The outcome for children is that they are kept safe. The standard of care in this home is very high. Children files contained care plans, risk assessments and day to day plans on how to manage each child's care needs.

The complaint policy has been reviewed and the home now has in place a complaints book and a compliments book. There were no recorded complaints since the last inspection but there were several compliments recorded.

The safeguarding policy has recently been updated. The staff are aware of the procedures to follow in the event of a child making a disclosure. There is on-going safeguarding training so children are protected on a day to day basis.

There is a strong commitment to the prevention of bullying and the home has a comprehensive policy on bullying that all staff are aware of. The system of rewards and sanctions is clear. Sanctions are fair and these are monitored by a senior member of staff to help ensure consistency.

The premises provide a very safe environment for the children placed at this home. Fire safety procedures are sound, with regular fire drills, and fire safety checks conducted in all parts of the premises at regular intervals. Any accidents are recorded in a suitable book. The home has had a recent Health and Safety audit conducted by the organisation's health and safety officer. There were some recommendations made and these are currently being addressed.

Risk assessments on children have improved since the last inspection and provide some analysis of risk together with clear guidance to staff on behaviour management strategies. Individual and group activities are also risk assessed and these are reviewed on a daily basis if necessary.

There is a system in place to ensure that all Criminal Record Bureau checks are updated every three years. Renewal reminders are sent out well in advance of renewal date. This home is part of the national provider scheme. Staff files are held in a central location and Ofsted's national and regional coordinators will arrange to look at the content of staff files as part of the annual head office audit process. When the head office audit has been completed, this information will be used as part of the inspection information and evidence.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are assessed and the home provides support according to these individual needs. Staff at the home ensure that children are encouraged to take part in activities that are compatible with their needs or interests. Children are supported as far as possible to enjoy themselves at this home. A good example of this is how the home has improved the garden to ensure that all children can have some fun in the garden. The raised flower beds provide an opportunity for those children in wheelchairs to be able to participate in gardening while the maze which is wheelchair accessible allows those children in wheelchairs to participate and have fun.

The home values education, staff attend and contribute to education meetings and reviews. There is good communication between the school and the home and children are supported to meet their personal targets. Behaviour programmes are in place to ensure there is consistency between the home, the school and the families.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the placement plans which set out their assessed needs and the objectives of the placement. These also state how the assessed needs would be met on a day to day basis. Children are encouraged to get involved in their review process. Evidence shows that statutory reviews take place on time. Children and their family members attend review meetings and contribute to the process.

The staff make every effort to ensure that children maintain good relationships with their family members where appropriate. Key workers liaise with the parents and pass significant information on to them.

Children are consulted by using their individual communication systems. The home has devised a pack titled the Listen up pack for each child and this informs staff about the child and how they communicate their feelings. The evidence shows that they and their family members are also consulted regularly in order to improve the service delivery. Information regarding access to advocacy services is provided.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

The home continues to provide satisfactory physical accommodation and facilities for the children it is currently registered for. The home is reasonably well maintained and appropriately furnished throughout. Children have individual bedrooms and children can personalise their rooms. There are sufficient bathrooms and shower facilities in each unit. Children are able to use the outside space for relaxation, the garden has improved and the maze is now complete.

Much thought has gone into providing a facility that all children can enjoy. The maze is accessible to wheelchair users. Staff say that this is a work in progress and will continually be developed.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, good systems and support for staff, and children are in place. The Statement of Purpose included all required information, such as, the facilities available and the objectives of the service.

Appropriate staffing arrangements are in place to meet the children's assessed needs. Children are supported by qualified and experienced staff. The Registered Manager is a qualified social worker and has several years of management experience in child care settings. The deputy managers and senior residential workers are also suitably qualified. However, the required minimum ratio of 80% of care staff completing their NVQ Level 3 training in child care has not been achieved.

All staff receive regular supervision and annual appraisals from their line managers. Weekly staff meetings are held and staff have opportunities to contribute to these meetings. The home works in partnership with the local health services and children have access to the services. Staff receive various training from health professionals which enable them to develop knowledge and skills to meet the complex needs of the children. The staff team are supported by administrative staff and domestic staff. The residential staff prepare the meals for the children.

Regulation 33 visits are carried out and reports written. However, the inspector did not see a system to monitor the performance of the home against its Statement of Purpose. Each child has an individual and secured record of their history and progress.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Evidence supports a consistent commitment to improving equality and diversity in practice. Children receive an individual service in the home which is designed to meet their personal needs.

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
29	ensure that there is at all times a sufficient number of suitably qualified, competent and experienced persons working at the children's home (Regulation 25.1)	28 August 2009
33	ensure there is a system in place to monitor the home against the matters set out in Schedule 6 at appropriate intervals (Regulation 34)	28 August 2009

Recommendations

There are no recommendations.