

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	16 February 2010
Inspector	Paula Eaton
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	9 July 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 children's home provides short-term care for up to six children with learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities, from birth to 14 years of age. The home is located on a multi-purpose site and operated by a large charitable organisation managed by a Board of Trustees.

The facilities are set in single level, purpose-built accommodation. There are six single occupancy bedrooms available. There is a communal lounge and dining area, and a soft play area available, as well as decking and garden space for use by the children. The facilities have been designed with the specific needs of the children in mind.

Some parking is available a short distance away from the home; however, a driveway with a turnaround point allows safe access to the home for children arriving and leaving.

Staff were observed interacting with the children who were staying at the home on the day of the inspection.

Summary

At this unannounced interim inspection, the key national minimum standards under the outcome heading staying safe were inspected.

Robust systems are in place to ensure that children are safeguarded. There are excellent policies and procedures for dealing with complaints, managing behaviour, responding to going missing without permission, and bullying. Staff build positive relationships with children and their parents and carers which support good communication and consistent care practice.

Children benefit from a safe and secure environment and are protected by robust staff recruitment and monitoring systems. The unit consistently provides a very good service for children and their families and staff are continuously striving to improve the standard of care provided.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were no actions set at the previous inspection.

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.

Children are afforded privacy and their dignity is respected. Staff support children with personal care tasks in a sensitive manner encouraging them to be as independent as possible. Staff also receive appropriate moving and handling training to ensure that they can safely transfer children. Staff understand the need to treat information in a sensitive manner which includes an awareness of when information needs to be passed on to protect children.

The level of complaints for the service is very low. There is an open and transparent atmosphere throughout the service and the Registered Manager is approachable and makes time for parents to contact her and discuss any concerns they may have regarding the care of their child while using the service. Staff build positive relationships with parents and carers which also support good communication and promote early resolution of any concerns. There is a comprehensive complaints procedure that is made available to parents and carers.

Robust child protection policies and procedures are in place. Staff receive regular safeguarding training to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities with regard to protecting the welfare of children and reporting any concerns that they may have. There is an appropriate anti-bullying policy in place; however, incidents of bullying are very rare. There are high staffing levels within the service and relationships between children are closely monitored. Any incidents that do occur between young people are usually as a result of challenging behaviour rather than bullying. Close supervision of children ensures that any impact of challenging behaviour is minimised.

Individual guidelines are in place including a risk assessment for any children who are likely to try to go missing without permission from the unit. In addition to this, young people are closely supervised and there are good security systems, as the children who use the service are very vulnerable and have complex needs. As a result of this, occurrences of children going missing are very rare.

Staff build positive relationships with children and respond to unacceptable behaviour constructively, avoiding the need for any form of physical restraint. A good understanding of children's communication needs including non-verbal cues ensures that staff are able to respond promptly to any signs of distress or deterioration in behaviour. This limits the impact of any difficult behaviour on other children and staff. Each young person's care plan includes detailed information regarding any difficult behaviours, triggers for these behaviours and any action staff should take to reduce incidents and minimise the impact of behaviour. This information is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes in the needs of children. Records relating to any incidents are monitored by the Registered Manager and Regulation 33 visitor.

Health and safety issues are taken seriously and there are robust systems to ensure that the environment is safe and secure for children at all times. Fire safety policies and procedures are comprehensive and have been recently updated following a visit from a local fire officer. This visit was instigated by the Registered Manager to ensure that the environment was safe and policies and procedures satisfactory. All the required checks of fire safety equipment take place at regular intervals including regular fire drills.

Comprehensive recruitment policies and procedures are in place and all the required recruitment checks are carried out prior to a member of staff commencing work at the unit.

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?

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.