

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Rachel Ruth Britten
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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

The children's home is run by a registered charity. This is a large single storey building designed for use as a children's home and day care centre. It offers up to five respite care places for children with learning disabilities who may also have physical disabilities. Day care is also offered for up to five children with severe learning disability who may have an associated physical disability. The service is offered on a planned basis over a yearly cycle for up to 65 children.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

The purpose of this unannounced interim inspection was to reassess the outcomes for young people under the national minimum standards relating only to the staying safe outcome. There were three actions and two previous recommendations made at the last full inspection in November 2010. The home continues to safeguard young people well overall through sustained good practice and generally robust systems of organisation. Five recommendations and one action are made to address shortfalls identified. These shortfalls do not have a direct impact upon the safety of young people but they do have the potential to do so.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were three actions and two recommendations raised at the last key inspection. All of these are satisfactorily addressed except one recommendation which is only partially met. This recommendation concerned the frequency of fire drills. A satisfactory number of fire drills are now taking place and there is good daily planning to ensure that staff on shift overnight are prepared for their roles in the event of an evacuation. However, no night time drill has taken place since the last inspection. Staff are to consider ways to address the standard fully without adversely impacting on children's health and well-being. A new recommendation is raised concerning this standard.

Evidence was seen at the inspection to show that the three actions raised at the last inspection have been met. The Statement of Purpose now includes full details of the staff group and their qualifications and experience. This is kept updated as things change too. Regulation 33 visits are now taking place regularly and are monitored by the manager. This ensures that action is taken upon matters raised and also ensures that 12 visits per year actually take place. Supervision is monitored by the manager and arranged monthly through a number of staff who supervise those who are immediately junior to them. A proforma is used for the agenda of every supervision meeting and this contains prompts for most subject areas required by the standard.

The recommendation about the restraint record is now met. This was to ensure that each restraint record included the name of the child concerned. A prompt for this has been added to the record. No further incidents involving restraint have happened and the amended record has therefore not yet been used in practice.

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's privacy is respected and carefully balanced with the need to protect each individual. Young people's sexuality, gender, level of understanding and intimate care needs are carefully considered and their care plans are robust and detailed. Young people are warmly welcomed when they come for respite stays. Staff settle them in and use photos, signs and communication systems to help them understand who is here and who will be looking after them. Parents' and carers' wishes about the use of photos in and out of the setting is clearly obtained and this also contributes to young people's safety. Young people may bring favourite toys, photos or items from home and choose to help prepare their bedroom. Choices are given as often as possible, to empower young people, and regular communication to parents and carers is encouraged to reassure young people and their families of their well-being. Managers carefully consider the impact of new admissions to the home and the mix of young people and their varying needs, to ensure that groups are as safe and compatible as possible. Suitable vetting of all staff and visitors takes place which also supports young people's safety in the setting.

Suitable equipment and space is provided to meet all young people's individual intimate care needs both safely and with dignity. Staff on duty re-visit care plans daily to ensure that each young person receives consistent care and appropriate challenge them to develop and achieve progress. Safe care practices are adopted to minimise the risks of possible abuse to young people, but these practices are balanced with young people's dignity and independence needs. For example, procedures for the administration of medicine or intimate care always include two members of staff being present to check and observe. These procedures are also always conducted away from other young people.

Young people using the setting are vulnerable and their learning disabilities preclude them in many instances from being able to use telephones and written information about who they could complain to if they were unhappy. Information about their rights is usually displayed and made available in suitable formats in the young people's guide to the service. Staff make every effort to engage with young people and understand their individual ways of expressing their feelings. A suitably skilled

advocate also visits the setting periodically and the systems to deal with formal and informal complaints from parents and carers are robust and transparent.

Staff demonstrate an adequate understanding of safeguarding procedures and they sign up to clear policies and procedures on all matters to do with allegations, child protection concerns and whistle-blowing. They receive annual refresher training in safeguarding and keep necessary contact details to hand. However, new staff have not always covered the child protection procedures before they start working, as part of their initial induction. This is unlikely to pose a risk to the quality of care because staff work closely together and discuss any concerns with their seniors. In addition, all staff are working to extremely comprehensive individual care plans and do not work in isolation from families and other agencies concerned with each young person's care and protection.

Young people are protected from bullying and harm by vigilant and proactive staff who understand each individual young person's behaviours and how to manage these effectively. Staff respond positively to all acceptable behaviour and engagement from young people. They do not patronise. As a result, young people are usually content and feel that they have choices and control about what they do and who they are with. Staff use regularly reviewed care plans and risk assessments to ensure that they promote safety and improving social behaviour and well-being for each young person. There are risk assessments drawn up individually when young people are at risk of running off. Staff can give many individual examples of significant success in supporting young people to adopt safer behaviour. This is achieved through the use of individualised de-escalation techniques, consistency, rewards, time limits, explanations of what is happening now and next, and star charts. As a result, there have been no incidents of restraints, sanctions or absconding behaviour since the last inspection and no incidents requiring notification to Ofsted.

Young people live in a home that provides good levels of physical safety and security. Visitors' identification is checked and a log completed. Main entrance doors are kept locked and the bedrooms are equipped with monitors and door alarms which are used if this is part of the young person's care plan. There are large enough communal rooms to allow for safe movement and there are suitable and safe bathrooms with regulated water temperatures. Hoisting and lifting equipment is serviced and used safely to assure young people's dignity and safety when they have significant health issues and physical disabilities. There is good equipment to facilitate all young people to bath, shower and sleep safely. Reviewed and practical risk assessments and safety checks help to support safety inside and outside the home. However, there is no documented risk assessment about the times, places and circumstances where bullying is most likely. As a result, there is insufficient consideration given to how the home and its staff can counteract and minimise the potential for bullying to take place.

The utilities and standard of the building are generally good. There is an accessible sensory room, soft play area, sensory garden, and garden for riding, swinging and sand play. Furnishings are suitable, but the standard of decoration is poor in many

parts of the home. There are frequent water leaks from the piping in the roof space. Although these are repaired promptly, the need for decoration has not been addressed because the cause of the ongoing leaks has not been rectified. This adversely affects the quality of the environment for young people. Most utilities are regularly checked and there are sufficient fire drills to meet the standard. However, no night time drills have been conducted and this is raised again as a recommendation at this inspection. The electrical installations check is also significantly out of date and the insurance certificate does not show the name and address of the setting. These shortfalls are not directly affecting young people, but they have the potential to do so.

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/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Std.	Action	Due date
26	ensure that all parts of the children's home used by children are	30/04/2011

	kept in good state of structural repair and decoration. (Regulation 31 (2))	
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Recommendations

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

- ensure that an introduction to child protection procedures, including an awareness of the policies and procedures, is provided for all staff before they start work, as part of their induction programmes (NMS 17.8 and 31.3)
- carry out recorded risk assessments of the times, places and circumstances in which the risk of bullying is at its greatest (NMS 26.2 and NMS 18.5)
- ensure that electrical installations are checked at least every three years (NMS 26.4)
- implement a fire drill to include at least an annual drill at night (NMS 26.8)
- ensure that the certificate of public liability insurance bears the name and address of the particular home. (NMS 26.9)