

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Jacqui Gosling
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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 home is a medium to long stay children's home which takes mainly planned admissions, but is able to accommodate young people in an emergency when necessary. The home can accommodate up to five young people between the ages of eight and 16. However, there may be no more than six years between the oldest and youngest resident. Currently four young people are living here.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This interim announced inspection was planned alongside an Ofsted education inspection reviewing the quality of both care and education provided by this service. The visit concentrated on all key national minimum standards in the outcome area of staying safe. It also looked at actions and recommendations made at the last inspection, which have all been fully addressed. Three young people participated in the inspection.

Young people are clearly benefiting from living in a home that has a strong emphasis on promoting their health, welfare and safety. Positive relationships exist between young people and staff.

One action has been made regarding promoting young people's education. A recommendation has been raised in respect of staff undertaking physical interventions. This is to ensure that all staff receive all the necessary training in order to ensure they use restraint safely.

The overall quality rating for this setting is good. This judgement will be reviewed at the home's next full inspection when all key national minimum standards will be reassessed.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection three actions and five recommendations were made.

The provision was asked to ensure that there is an up-to-date placement plan for each child or young person accommodated at the home, including the information, documents and records specified in Schedule 3 relating to that child. The manager has been proactive in liaising with the local authority and all required looked after child documentation has been obtained. This ensures that the care plan for young people reflects their current placement.

They were also asked to prepare, in consultation with the child's placing authority, a written plan for the child before providing accommodation for that child, or if that is not reasonably practical, as soon as possible thereafter. All statutory reviews have now been held and all information regarding the care of young people is up to date.

The third action was to promote the contact of each child with their relatives. All young people are now having regular contact with their relatives. This ensures that young people are able to spend time with people they care about.

The provision was also asked ensure that staff, receive supervision and staff meetings occur at least monthly as directed by the national minimum standards. All staff now receive regular supervision and team meetings as required. This ensures that staff are actively supported to undertake all the responsibilities of their role in order to safeguard young people's welfare.

The manager was further asked to ensure consent for the administration of first aid has been obtained from the person with parental responsibility and is retained on file. This has been implemented and ensures that young people can receive prompt medical attention should the need occur.

The final recommendation was to establish a written system to record the Registered Manager's formal consideration of the needs of new children to be admitted, and the likely effects of the admission on the existing group of residents. The manager has now implemented a new system of evaluating and risk assessing potential new admissions, that is now sufficiently robust to ensure that the needs of the possible new admission and the current residents are considered.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Consent for the administration of first aid has been obtained from the person with parental responsibility for all young people and is retained on their files.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people are looked after safely because there are sound systems in place to protect them. Staff are experienced and well trained and have a good understanding of the individual needs of the young people in their care.

There are good arrangements for protecting young people's rights to privacy, for managing complaints and safeguarding them. Staff are trained to understand the signs and symptoms of abuse and have a very good understanding of their responsibilities in relation to reporting and managing child protection concerns. They are also clear about their responsibility to promote privacy and confidentiality. Staff

make sure that information that is held about young people is stored securely and are professional about sharing confidential records.

There is evidence that there are few complaints from young people. Records of complaints show that these are well managed, Young people do not feel that bullying is an issue in the home. Staff make sure that young people are appropriately supervised and encourage them to talk openly about any difficulties there may be between them. This helps young people to feel confident that staff will resolve issues that may arise.

There is a clear procedure detailing the actions staff should take to protect young people if they go missing from the home, to ensure their safe return. There is clear evidence that care practices are effective as young people rarely leave the home without the knowledge of the staff.

Staff are trained to support young people to behave in a socially acceptable way. They make sure that young people are given clear, consistent, boundaries and positive role models and develop good relationships with them that are based on mutual respect. This helps young people to feel confident with staff and settled in the home. Individual risk assessments and care plans support practice and inform staff about the presenting behaviours posed by young people and the measures taken to minimise them. Physical intervention is used only as a last resort and in the least restrictive way, to protect the individual young person and others in the home. However, the manager must ensure all staff receive training in all the techniques used before they participate in all restraints.

Young people live in an environment that is kept safe. There is an appropriate schedule for servicing equipment and installations. Fire systems are checked regularly. Young people are involved in evacuation drills, so that they understand what to do in the event of a fire or other emergency. A recent visit by the fire authority found the home complies with new legislation.

The organisation has a robust recruitment procedure, which ensures that all prospective staff are properly vetted before they start work at the home. The identity of all visitors to the home is checked. These measures ensure that young people are safeguarded from individuals who may pose a risk to them.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people receive care in line with their identified needs and wishes as stated in their placement plan.

The manager and staff actively promote education to motivate young people to achieve successfully. Attendance at either mainstream school or the home's own school is an established part of the daily life of the home. Staff also offer their support to young people during the school day.

The on site school provision is registered with the Department for Children, Schools and Families and this joint inspection with Her Majesty's Inspector for Education has highlighted some significant shortfalls in education.

There is an excellent range of activities for the young people. Staff ensure that the young people have both paid and unpaid leisure opportunities. For example, visits to the cinema or a game of football at the local park.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All young people have up-to-date looked after child documentation as required. The care that young people receive in the home is regularly reviewed through the statutory reviewing process. Young people are well supported by staff to enable them to take a full part in their reviews.

Staff promote young people's contact with family and friends, where it is safe to do so. Contact arrangements for all young people are in place and kept under review.

Young people move into and leave the home in a planned way. A detailed assessment will be completed before any new young person is admitted to the home. This considers whether the placement can meet the young person's needs and the impact of the placement on the young people already living in the home. Young people also leave the home in planned a way and great care is taken to ensure that they are properly supported into their new home. These systems promote the welfare of young people and support the smooth running of the home.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The home offers sufficient space to meet the different care and education needs of all the young people and ensure their privacy is not compromised. The young people's challenging behaviour has lessened and the staff have had the opportunity to renovate parts of the home that were previously showing signs of wear and tear. There is a maintenance and improvement programme in place. This ensures young people enjoy homely accommodation.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

There is good leadership and management support because the Registered Manager is qualified, skilled and experienced, and provides strong and effective leadership to the staff team and young people. The Registered Manager is actively involved in the day-to-day operation of the home and has clear expectations that the staff team will

achieve the best possible outcomes for all young people in their care.

Staff receive regular supervision from the home's manager or senior staff and team meetings are held in accordance with national minimum standards. This ensures young people are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting their welfare.

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
14	promote the educational attainment of children accommodated in the home. (Regulation 18(1))	10/02/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure all staff are trained in and follow in practice the registered person's policy on the use and techniques of physical restraint.(NMS 22.8)