

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC020602
Inspection date	27/01/2011
Inspector	Trevor Hall
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	12/07/2010
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2011

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 Crispins, 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 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 children's home provides care and accommodation for up to five young persons of either gender aged from eight up to the age of 17 years. The home is owned by a private childcare organisation.

The home is located in a quiet village. Accommodation is provided in a well-appointed detached family house, converted from a former school premises, in the village. This provides young people with individual bedrooms and ample communal space. The home's positioning in a village not far from the outskirts of a large town facilitates easy access to schools and a wide variety of recreational, social and sporting activities.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This was a interim unannounced inspection that concentrated on all key national minimum standards in the outcome area of staying safe. It also looked at the home's response to the one recommendation made at the home's last key inspection, that took place on the 12 July 2010.

This home continues to provides an outstanding standard of care and support that helps young people in their education, personal, social and emotional development. The home's Registered Manager provides effective leadership which results in staff being clearly focused on meeting the needs of the young people. No new actions or recommendations have been made. Staff relationships with young people are caring and very supportive. As a result, young people benefit from living in a home that is a place of safety, that is consistently managed and organised so as to promote outstanding outcomes for those individuals accommodated.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the recording of physical interventions by staff has improved. All areas of the house recording format have been completed on each and every occasion and the record now includes all of the information required under national minimum standard 22.9.

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 are clearly benefiting from living in a home that has a good focus on safeguarding and protection matters. Staff are committed to enabling young people to develop the necessary skills to keep themselves safe and to take responsibility for their actions in preparation for their adult lives. Effective and robust systems and practices enable young people to take controlled risks in a supportive environment, which help young people develop their self-confidence whilst keeping themselves safe.

Assessments of risk are very good and are routinely re-assessed following incidents or accidents. Communication between staff is excellent, all have a clear understanding of the home's current care planning arrangements for each young person, particularly in respect of their individual contact arrangements or their permitted access to the local community. The home has clear leadership that promotes an environment where protection and safety is seen as important.

Staff are sensitive to young people's needs and promote their privacy and dignity, they always knock on their doors and do not go into their bedrooms without permission. Young people's administrative records are maintained securely and contents are not discussed inappropriately. Staff are aware of the children's right to privacy and how this should be safely promoted. Young people are aware that their bedroom may be searched if safeguarding concerns arise. Where searches are undertaken, clear records are kept which the young person is given the opportunity to sign.

Systems within the home and open relationships with staff enable young people to raise any concerns they may have in a safe and supportive environment. Details about the home's complaints process are outlined in the children's guide and staff provide information and additional support if young people require this. The home's records confirm that young people have been able to access the complaints process and that all such complaints have been appropriately investigated and recorded. Complaint resolutions are shared with the young people who are afforded the opportunity to sign the record; any refusal to sign is also recorded. The Registered Manager of the home monitors the complaints record to ensure young people's rights are upheld, and that the process is effective.

Bullying is known to be unacceptable by staff and young people, and does not appear to be a current feature in the home. The home has an appropriate anti-bullying policy which is well advertised around the home stating that bullying

behaviour is not tolerated.

Young people are encouraged to behave well, to establish, achieve and maintain levels of behaviour that are socially acceptable and that will sustain them in the wider community. The home's records not only detail sanctions used for poor behaviour but also positive consequences and rewards for behaviour that deserves congratulation and praise. Staff are acutely aware of the need to balance their interventions with positive feedback about young people's achievements, rather than just punishing poor behaviour. Evidence of regular monitoring of these records, by the home's manager, to ensure consistency and compliance with regulations is clearly apparent.

Staff are aware of and have access to the Local Safeguarding Children Board's procedures describing how to recognise signs of abuse and indicating ways in which young people can put themselves at risk. Clear procedures and practices to deal with unauthorised absence help to protect young people from the risk of harm and abuse. Risk assessments are carried out for each young person. The staff team and young people have built up positive relationships with the local community police who regularly visit the home and talk to young people about keeping themselves safe.

Staff receive appropriate training and have sufficient guidance in the safe use of physical intervention. Such interventions are used only as a last resort and then only to prevent physical harm to individuals or to prevent excessive damage to property. Since the last inspection the recording of physical interventions by staff has improved. All areas of the house recording format are completed on each and every occasion, prior to these being signed off by the home's manager. Young people are routinely invited to make comment if physical interventions are applied and their refusal to do so is also recorded.

The management of health and safety processes is appropriate, which helps to protect young people from the risk of harm or injury in the home. Equipment and installations are serviced regularly and there are regular fire safety tests. Young people take part in evacuation drills, so that they understand what to do in the event of a fire or other emergency. Risk assessments on the environment and young people's activities are robust and are regularly reviewed to make sure that information is up to date.

Young people's protection is further supported by safe recruitment, selection and vetting practices for all new staff. The service has a clearly defined system in place that ensures all necessary checks have been completed and are acceptable prior to any staff member starting work in the home. A written record of this process is maintained for inspection and is followed in respect of all staff currently employed. Visitors to the home have their identification checked and are now asked to sign in and out of 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.