

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC021677
Inspection date	17 February 2010
Inspector	Bill Drumm
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	26 October 2009
--------------------------------	-----------------

© Crown copyright 2010

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

The home provides medium- to long-term accommodation to four young people of either sex, between the ages of 11 and 17 years.

The home is approximately three miles from the city centre. It is close to schools, local and community facilities and public transport routes.

The young people have their own single bedroom and access to a lounge, dining room and kitchen. To the rear of the building there is a yard with some outdoor play equipment and a barbecue.

Four young people were living at the home at the time of the inspection, none of whom were available to contribute to the inspection process.

Summary

This was an unannounced interim inspection of the home. The outcome areas for young people in the areas of being healthy, staying safe, making a positive contribution, economic wellbeing and organisation were inspected and found to be good. The home has made some improvements since the last inspection. However, a number of recommendations made at the previous inspection have yet to be met. The home is still judged to be good. Young people are supported by a competent and experienced staff team. Relationships between young people and staff appear positive, and this forms the basis for promoting and developing good standards of behaviour. Internal and external monitoring of the operation of the home is good. The home's records are maintained to a good standard and information relating to young people is kept secure and confidential.

Five recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection, three of which were also made at the previous inspection. However, the home is well managed overall and outcomes for young people are good.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the manager has tidied up the external appearance of the home. In addition, some improvements have been made in the amount of information and essential documentation received by the home at the time of a young person's admission.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young people's health needs are not fully promoted. Each young person does not have a detailed health plan to which they have contributed. This was raised at the previous inspection and contributes toward the healthcare needs of young people being unmet. Young people are registered with a local GP, dentist and optician and are supported to attend regular checkups and appointments. The immediate healthcare needs of young people are safeguarded.

Young people living at the home are protected by the home's medication administration systems. Policies and procedures relating to the safe handling of medication are in place. Members of staff are provided with written guidance for the administration of controlled drugs although the home does not have a controlled drugs register in place. This issue was raised at the previous inspection. No young people living at the home are taking prescribed medication. All members of staff have undertaken formal training in first aid and the safe handling and administration of medication, and all training is currently up to date. Young people living at the home have their health needs met and are safeguarded by the home's policies and procedures.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Good arrangements are in place to ensure that information relating to young people is kept secure and confidential. Staff are conscious not to speak about young people in the presence of other young people and are careful to ensure that their telephone conversations are not overheard. Young people have access to a telephone and can make calls in private. Young people have their own bedrooms, which they are encouraged to personalise in a style of their own choosing.

There are good procedures and systems in place to support young people who may wish to make a complaint. Two complaints have been made since the last inspection. Written records show that these were investigated and the young person making the complaint was satisfied with the outcome. Information about complaints is freely available within the home, as are contact numbers for the regulator and children's counselling charities.

Young people living at the home are protected from exploitation and abuse. A copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures are available in the home. A copy of the LSCB procedures are not available for all the local authorities who have placed young people at the home. There have been no child protection referrals made since the last inspection. All members of staff working at the home have undertaken training in child protection, although refresher training is not provided at regular intervals.

Young people are protected from being targeted by bullies. The home has policies and procedures in place with regard to countering bullying. There have been no recorded incidents of bullying since the last inspection. The young people's guide to the home includes information for young people about what action they should take if they feel bullies are targeting them. The manager of the home has undertaken a risk assessment of the times, places and circumstances when bullying might occur. Members of staff working at the home have not undertaken training in countering bullying.

Procedures for dealing with any incidents when young people are absent without authority are in place. Each young person has a risk assessment in relation to this, which is used to inform staff decision-making about when to report incidents to the police.

The home works with young people to help them develop socially acceptable behaviour. Sanctioning of young people is used and their effectiveness is monitored by the home's management. All sanctions used are permissible and written records are maintained. Young people have behaviour management plans in place. Staff are trained in positive handling techniques and strategies, and restraint is only ever used as a last resort.

Young people are protected from fire and other hazards within the home. There are systems in place to ensure that young people, members of staff and visitors to the home are kept safe and free from hazards. Fire drills are carried out at regular intervals. The home's insurance certificate does not clearly state that the home has current public and employee liability insurance up to a minimum value.

Staff working at the home have undergone a thorough recruitment and selection process to ensure that they are suitable to work with young people. The home has appropriate arrangements for the vetting of all visitors.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young people living at the home are appropriately placed. Each young person has their own placement plan, which outlines what their needs are and how they will be met. In order to help ensure that needs are met, the manager and members of staff undertake individual risk assessments of each young person following their admission.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Young people are provided with homely and comfortable accommodation which is well maintained. The home's management has systems in place to monitor the physical state of the premises and make necessary repairs. Each young person has their own bedroom and they have access to a sufficient number of bathrooms, which afford them privacy.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Each member of staff holds the National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. Young people are looked after by members of staff who are trained to meet their needs. Rotas allow for staff handovers and satisfactory deputising arrangements are in place. A record of all training received by members of staff is maintained within the home. Most mandatory training is updated at regular intervals, however, some staff training has not been kept up-to-date.

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 Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
----------	--------	----------

Recommendations

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

- ensure that each young person has a clear and up to date health care plan (NMS 12.2)
- review the home's procedures for the safe handling, administration and recording of prescribed medications, particularly controlled drugs. (NMS 13.2)
- ensure that copies of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures for each placing authority are available within the home (NMS 17.2)
- ensure that the home has current public and employee liability insurance up to a minimum value (NMS 26.9)
- ensure that young people are looked after by staff who are fully trained and that members of staff receive at least six paid days of training per year. (NMS 31.4)