

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspection date	26/10/2010
Inspector	Mark Kersh
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	10/12/2009
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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 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 is a children's home located in a diverse area of a city. The home provides accommodation for four young people aged from 11 years to 17 years. The home comprises two independent flats for young people's use and an adjoining unit for two young people living together and supported by staff.

Three young people currently live in this home and one of them was present during the inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was a unannounced interim inspection, which was used to assess the home's capacity to meet the outcome area for staying safe. The outcome areas for being healthy, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution, economic well-being and organisation were not assessed on this occasion. A recommendation from the previous inspection was checked for compliance.

The home is a good service. Young people's welfare and safety is effectively promoted. There are good systems in place to promote health and safety within the home. Staff are experienced and well trained and they know what to do, to keep young people safe and protect them from coming to harm.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the previous inspection the Registered Manager was asked to ensure young people are given the opportunity to have their views recorded and sign their names against the sanction records kept by the home. This recommendation has not been met and will be carried forward following this 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 good.

Young people's privacy is respected and promoted. They are provided with their own separate bedrooms and the home's washing facilities enable them to wash with privacy and dignity. Young people's private records are securely stored by staff to protect them. Staff handle young people's sensitive information confidentially.

There have been no complaints made about the care in the home or from the surrounding community since the previous inspection. Young people are aware of the home's complaints procedure, so they do know how to make a complaint if they need to. There are good arrangements in place for young people to raise their complaints or concerns independently. The home's complaints policy is clearly summarised for young people in a user-friendly format, which is known and referred to as a children's guide.

There are no current issues or concerns in relation to bullying. There are, however, ongoing concerns with the levels of unauthorised absence. Where young people have gone missing records clearly show that staff have followed the home's procedures, to promote their safe return. Risks associated with young people going missing are clearly recorded and risk assessments are stringently followed to promote young people's welfare and safety. The home works closely with outside agencies charged with protecting young people to implement effective strategies to minimise young people being absent without authority. All staff are trained in child protection, so that they know how to protect young people from abuse, exploitation and harm.

All staff are trained in the use of restraint, which includes diversion and de-escalation strategies to enable them to manage young people's behaviours safely. There have been no recorded restraints following the previous inspection. Sanctions are used fairly as a reprimand to show young people there are consequences towards any unacceptable behaviour. However, young people do not have an opportunity to write or have their views recorded and sign their names against them in the sanction records kept by the home.

Health and safety is effectively promoted and there are good systems in place for the routine maintenance and testing of the home's household electrical appliances. All of the home's fire appliances are professionally serviced and there are good arrangements made for the promotion of fire safety, in which all young people and staff are trained. There are weekly inspection of the home's fire safety systems for health and safety reasons. Regular fire drills take place, and young people and staff know how to evacuate the home safely.

Safe recruitment practices are followed and this ensures that staff employed are appropriately vetted. Staff files were inspected during this visit and these were found to be fully compliant with legislative requirements. Staff are not permitted to work with children until all of the necessary checks have been completed and cleared.

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?

Recommendations

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

- ensure when disciplinary measures are used, young people are encouraged to write or have their views recorded and sign their names against them if possible in the records kept by the home. (NMS 22.14)