

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	14 October 2009
Inspector	Norma Welsby
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	18 June 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 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

This children's home provides modern and domestic accommodation, for a maximum of three young women. The house is located on the site of a secure estate but is an open house and is independently staffed and equipped and has its own extensive gardens.

Placements are arranged on a short term transitional basis, for young women who have previously been placed within one of the secure units, located on site. The purpose of the home is to provide a more focused opportunity, a stepping stone, for young women to prepare for their next placement, in an open setting. The use of this house can also allow additional opportunities for increased levels of semi-independent living within a domestic setting.

The home's staffing structure includes team manager, senior and support care workers. The staff team is managed and supported by the on site Registered Manager. Staffing arrangements provide a dedicated staff team, with two members of staff on duty, throughout the day and night.

The area is well served with local shops and community resources and the local town centre is approximately one and a half miles away and easily accessed by public transport.

Summary

During this inspection the outcome area of staying safe was examined and judged to be good. Previous actions and recommendations were also examined and confirmed that the service has responded positively.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the full inspection in June 2009, four actions and five recommendations were made. The actions related to first aid training, staff recruitment records, updating the Statement of Purpose and monitoring significant records, such as measures of control. Each of these areas have been positively addressed and improves outcomes for young people residing at the service. The recommendations related to staff training in mental health in young people and fire prevention, staff supervision, medication labelling and evidencing the Registered Manager's direct involvement in the operation of the open house. There has been a very positive response to these each of these recommendations, but the role of the Registered Manager in respect of the management of the open house needs further consideration by the organisation.

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.

This service has comprehensive policies and procedures in place to promote the safety of young people. Staff are very committed to providing young people with support and knowledge to develop their own sense of personal safety and acceptable risk taking.

Young people's privacy is respected and personal information is handled confidentially. Staff treat young people in a respectful and supportive way.

There is an established complaints procedure and a senior manager has delegated responsibility to oversee all complaints. Staff take a positive approach to managing complaints and endeavour to resolve them as soon as possible and as a result young people feel listened to.

Staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding and child protection procedures. A comprehensive staff training programme provides staff with regular opportunities to undertake refresher training. A policy to counter bullying is also in place and staff manage situations well and are very mindful of individual needs and vulnerabilities of young people.

The service has written policies and procedures in place, in respect of unauthorised absence. Staff have good links with the police liaison officer and have established individual protocols with agreed timescales for notification. Young people are aware of these protocols and why staff follow them.

Staff promote acceptable behaviour by providing clear boundaries and structure. A reward system is in place, along with a system of reparation. Staff have an open and positive rapport with young people and they work hard to enable young people to develop a better sense of personal responsibility and respect for others. Individual risk assessments are particularly thorough in identifying risks but do not give adequate weight to identifying strategies to manage such risks.

The house provides a safe and comfortable domestic environment, which is maintained to a high standard. Young people have their own personal space and access to a garden and summer house. All staff have recently had fire safety refresher training. Fire safety procedures and associated records are not readily available for inspection and this important area of responsibility is not clearly delegated.

An established recruitment procedure is in place, that appropriately vets new members of staff. There have been no new external appointments since the last inspection. All visitors to the service are also vetted.

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 meets the Care Standards Act 2000, The Childrens Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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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):

- give further consideration to the position of Registered Manager in respect of the open setting (NMS 33)
- delegate fire safety procedures, including ongoing staff training and recording, to a senior member of staff (NMS 26)
- ensure that individual risk assessments give proper attention to appropriate strategies to manage identified risks (NMS 22).