

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Paul Gillespie
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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 home is one of 11 children's homes that are owned and operated by this private company. The home provides care and accommodation for one young person with emotional and behavioural difficulties aged from eight to 17 years.

The home is a two-bedded terrace house and its location enables young people to access facilities in the community easily. It is close to bus stops, a railway station, local schools, shops, youth groups, leisure centres and parks. It is staffed on a one-to-one basis, with one member of the staff team sleeping within the home each night on a rota basis. The home's staff team are managed and supported by the Registered Manager, who is also registered as a manager for two other children's homes operated by the provider in the area.

No young people were accommodated at the time of the inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

The service is currently not providing accommodation to children and young people. Our inspection methodology relies on evidence found at the time of the inspection and this essentially includes user's views about the service. As this evidence is not available when there are no children or young people present we have completed a proportionate inspection; the purpose of which is to decide that should an admission be made the service would be able to work to a satisfactory standard.

Overall there are sound systems in place to ensure the home is able to care well for young people who may be placed in the future. However, some attention is required to ensure fire drills and emergency lighting checks are undertaken at appropriate intervals so that staff and young people are fully aware of the procedures in the event of a fire. Four previous recommendations are restated and are referred to below.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the Registered Manager was asked to address three actions. Two involved securing key documentation to allow staff to effectively support young people. Specifically, the record of the last review and the pathway plan. This information was subsequently secured. Also the Registered Manager needed to ensure action was taken to address issues identified through the completion of Regulation 33 reports. There is now an improved process by which the matters identified are addressed. This assists the organisations overall quality assurance.

There were seven further recommendations with progress made in ensuring the current core staff hold a recognised childcare qualification to the required level: team meetings are now held on a more regular basis; and sanctions have been reviewed to ensure they are not excessive. Three of the remaining recommendations are restated as it was not possible to fully assess whether the measures taken have been appropriately implemented as no young people were currently placed. These are ensuring the home's plan for supporting young people is sufficiently comprehensive: more effectively evidencing how young people's views and those of their families and others significant to them are sought; and ensure risk assessments contain sufficient detail of the known or likely activities, young people engage in. The final recommendation is also restated as the Statement of Purpose is in need of updating to accurately reflect the current staffing arrangements.

Addressing these points will help ensure the focus continues to be on the promotion of welfare of young people and the quality of care in the home.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The home has sound systems in place to actively promote young people's physical health and emotional well-being, for example, through ensuring individual young people are registered with a local doctor, dentist and optician. There are also useful health plans that help identify any issues arising from young people's cultural background, gender and disabilities.

The promotion of healthy lifestyles is central to the ethos of the home. There is good access to a range of helpful sources of information about health and social issues, such as sexual health, relationships and diet and nutrition.

The home also ensures that young people's health needs are able to be well met and protected by detailed and clear medication procedures. Medication is securely stored and records of administration are clearly set out to ensure young people only have medication specifically prescribed for them and that they take it in line with the prescription instructions. Staff are trained in managing medication and first aid and this assists with ensuring young people have access to help and support with health issues when needed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The home has a good emphasis on supporting young people to stay safe. The staff are knowledgeable about the importance of securing the welfare of young people, including protecting them from harm. For example, the staff are familiar with the home's safeguarding policy and know what they should do if there is a concern about young people's welfare. There is sound policy and procedural guidance for staff with

regard to supporting young people to manage their individual feelings about the potential for bullying and to reflect on the impact this may have. Likewise, there are procedures in place that offer effective guidance to staff about what to do should a young person become missing from care.

The rights of young people are well respected, for example, young people can be afforded privacy when making telephone calls and their right to complain is promoted. Young people's health and safety is generally well supported through good fire safety procedures. However, currently there is a shortfall in undertaking fire drills at appropriate intervals so that staff and young people are fully aware of the procedures in the event of a fire. In addition, although known hazards to the welfare of young people now include the level of potential risk as well as the likelihood of the risk occurring some are not sufficiently detailed to inform staff what action should be taken to minimise the risk.

The staff are trained in the use of care and control so that they are able to prevent young people from injuring themselves or others should challenging situations occur. There are appropriate systems in place for the recording of physical intervention and sanctions that may be issued. However, there has been minimal use of either for sometime as the emphasis is on rewarding achievements and recognising positive behaviour.

The recruitment of staff is sufficiently robust which ensures the suitability of workers to work with young people.

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 satisfactory.

Recent recruitment has meant that a stable core staff team has now been identified for the home. However, at present the home has no children or young people accommodated. As a consequence, the remaining staff have been redeployed within other homes in the group.

Staff have good access to a range of training, such as, managing violence and aggression, anti-bullying training and updated safeguarding training. The current identified core staff team are suitably qualified to National Vocational Qualification at level 3 or above.

The system for monitoring the quality of care in the home is good in terms of identifying any trends or patterns in the recordings and events. This level of monitoring helps to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people.

The Statement of Purpose and the children's guide provides the intended reader with a good picture about the service. This includes explaining the function and purpose of the home. However, it does not currently reflect recent changes to the staffing arrangements and the training that has been undertaken. The children's guide is aimed specifically at young people and provides them access to beneficial information that informs them about what they can expect from the home, including what the rules are and how to raise a concern.

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
26	maintain adequate precautions to protect young people, staff and visitors against the risk of fire, such as ensuring fire drills are undertaken at appropriate intervals in line with the national minimum standards. (NMS 26)	29/04/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure the Statement of Purpose is up to date, specifically when details refer to staff training ensure this information is accurate (NMS 1)
- ensure that risk assessments contain sufficient detail of known or likely activities and that they include an assessment of the likelihood of the risk occurring (NMS 26.2)
- consider ways to more effectively evidence how young people's views and those of their families and others significant to them are sought (NMS 8)
- ensure the home's plan developed from the authorities pathway plan is sufficiently comprehensive and specifies the support and assistance young people will receive. (NMS 6)