

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspection date	25/03/2011
Inspector	Lucy Ansell
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	06/12/2010
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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 specialist home dealing with children and young people who have been severely traumatised or psychologically deprived, with disordered patterns of attachment. This home is part of a children's charity and along with its school provides a programme of care, therapeutic work and education for up to 10 children and young people, aged between five and 13 years of age.

The home is located in a rural setting. It is a detached Edwardian house with accommodation arranged on three floors, providing a warm, child-friendly environment. There is a rear garden with a play area, a vegetable garden and a tarmac area for cycling/rollerblading.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This was an unannounced random inspection and staff, children and young people present in the home were spoken to. The focus of the inspection was to look at staying safe and assess whether the previous recommendations had been met. Judgements remain the same as the last inspection report as not all key standards were inspected. The children and young people all appear to be thriving in an environment which places great emphasis upon nurture and safety. A stable staff team has the training, guidance and support necessary to provide the children and young people with the care they need to move on successfully to other placements. The home provides excellent levels of safety and security and staff members implement appropriate behavioural boundaries and loving support. No actions or recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

Two recommendations were made at the last inspection, both of which were to help strengthen the monitoring of processes. One was to ensure there was a comprehensive record of the recruitment process checks being recorded. The other was to ensure the effectiveness and any consequence of a restraint or sanction was being clearly recorded. These have both been addressed and the new systems are ensuring continued safeguarding of the children and young people.

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.

Staff respect children and young people's privacy and are careful to maintain confidentiality when discussing them on the telephone or handling information about them. Wherever possible, a mixed staff group is on duty enabling sensitivity linked to gender issues or if a child or young person is requiring assistance with personal care. Children and young people are enabled to use the home's cordless telephone to make calls which are supervised in a private area of the home.

Staff recognise that it is important for children and young people to raise their concerns and that they are supported to do so either within the daily communal meetings or in private with a key member of staff. New child-friendly complaints posters are placed around the home and information for further support from external agencies is offered to the children and young people. Any concerns are taken seriously, investigated and acted upon. No complaints have been received since the last inspection.

Staff are well trained in child protection and know how to respond to safeguarding concerns. The local safeguarding procedures are readily available in the home for staff to reference and the senior managers provides additional support for staff on duty.

Staff express to the children and young people that bullying is unacceptable; excellent staffing levels help minimise the risk of it occurring. Risk assessments underpin practice at the home; staff update them regularly. Although children and young people at the home do not raise bullying as a concern they confirm that 'staff sort out any problems'. Staff are alert to intimidating behaviour and intervene promptly to de-escalate any situations. There have been no instances of absences without authority; however the staff are clear about the procedure to follow should this occur. Activities are well planned to ensure staff numbers are appropriate for those children or young people involved.

Children and young people are helped to develop good behaviours by staff rewarding positive behaviour; and by using staff members as excellent role models. The children and young people understand that they are likely to miss out on an outing or a treat as a sanction and this works effectively given their age. Written records on the use of sanctions and physical restraints contain clear and comprehensive details and every team member has attended accredited external physical intervention training. The effectiveness of the management of behaviour is now explicitly recorded within the log books. There is clear specific behaviour management

guidance for each individual child or young person. All records pertaining to behaviour management are scrutinised and monitored by the Registered Manager on a monthly basis.

Excellent measures are undertaken to maintain the safety and security of the children and young people. The environment is well maintained, the home has public liability insurance. Risk assessments are completed for the premises, individual behaviours and activities which also protect children and young people. Regular checks of fire prevention equipment are undertaken and are well recorded. Quarterly unannounced fire drills are carried out throughout the 24 hour period. All electrical and gas appliances are serviced and checked regularly.

Visitors and contractors are well vetted; they are required to show evidence of identification, to sign the visitors' book and are well supervised while on site. Similarly, a robust recruitment process is well managed by the senior and administrative staff; records confirm that all the required information is received prior to staff employment.

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.