

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	2 February 2010
Inspector	Mark Blesky
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	17 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 is a children's home registered to care for up to three children. The home is situated near a seaside town and is close to shops, local amenities and the beach. The home is in a residential area with little to distinguish the home from any other nearby property.

Summary

This unannounced interim inspection looked at the progress the setting has made with the recommendations made at the last inspection of June 2009. These related to improvements to the behaviour management and recording of behaviour control along with health and safety systems. Action has been taken by the registered person to review the areas where recommendations were made and consequently systems and practices have been improved. Recommendations were also made to ensure staff training meets the national minimum standards. Training programmes are in place but due to the long-term nature of this training, staff have yet to complete these programmes. Being healthy, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution and economic wellbeing were not looked at during this inspection. The provision has taken appropriate action to resolve previous recommendations.

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 last inspection, the registered person was asked to improve the behaviour management practice and the manner in which records that addressed sanctions were made. The registered person was also asked to review risk assessments to ensure these were effective and informed practice appropriately. Review has taken place in behaviour management and staff ensure that appropriate care and control is in place. Systems of recording have been reviewed and records that detail sanctions and measures used to modify behaviour are now comprehensive and well managed.

Health and safety monitoring and recording has been overviewed; systems of review are now in place to keep health, and safety provisions effective and up to date. The registered person has taken appropriate steps to improve the quality of the home for 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 good.

Young people are treated with respect by the staff and staff ensure that young people's personal information is kept safe and confidential. All staff follow clear procedural guidance in dealing with young people's personal information and the need to respect privacy. Young people say that staff knock on doors and wait before entering their bedrooms. Privacy is maintained for washing, bathing and other personal matters. When personal information is exchanged between young people and staff, staff ensure that other young people are not present.

All complaints are addressed promptly and the process of complaint resolution is well managed. Young people are fully involved in any complaint that they make and are asked to agree the resolution or indeed make further representation if they are dissatisfied. All complaints are comprehensively recorded and the manager maintains an oversight of all incidents of complaint.

The company's safeguarding and child protection co-ordinator oversees safeguarding matters. All staff receive mandatory safeguarding training which deals with allegations and signs and symptoms of abuse. The home maintains a comprehensive and detailed safeguarding procedure, which mirrors the protocols of the local authority. Robust records are maintained to record all reported incidents where safeguarding is a concern and monthly monitoring by the company is carried out.

Anti-bullying procedures are in place and the home promotes a proactive approach to bullying. Anti bullying, is a subject that is raised in young people's meetings and staff meetings in addition to one to one key working. The home has recently introduced a revised anti-bullying procedure where staff also record incidents of suspected bullying. This practice supports the raising of awareness and seeks to increase young people's insight. Matters such as diversity and difference are also raised in this document. Young people say staff will not tolerate bullying and that bullying is not a feature of this home.

When young people are missing from the home or are absent without agreement, staff respond with effective missing person procedures. Guidance is provided to ensure staff search, report and recover young people in a planned and consistent manner. Risk assessment is undertaken on all young people and absence from the home is specifically addressed.

When young people act in a negative manner staff use approved behaviour control strategies. Staff will typically sit down with the young person and try to determine why behaviour is becoming negative, and discuss options that are more positive. It is the philosophy in this home that control measures should not be overly punitive and reparation is used in many cases. Where a sanction is imposed or control is more formal, staff keep detailed records of the event, the method of control deployed and the effectiveness of the action taken.

Risk assessments are carried out on all young people using information about known behaviours or behaviours that have emerged. Risk assessments are full and comprehensive with some useful analysis. Risk assessments address both the behaviours of the young person and environmental or situational factors that might influence risk. Risk assessments are well managed and regularly reviewed. Procedures are in place in the home for regular fire risk assessment and health and safety review. However some fire equipment has been re-sited and recording has not reflected this. Maintenance of equipment is carried out by an approved contractor and the manager oversees risk assessments during regular reviews. However the decking area of the garden is slippery due to moss and this presents a risk. All newly recruited staff are subject to robust checking and interview by an established recruitment panel. Statutory checks and checks with former employers are carried out. No staff member is employed until appropriate checks are completed. All visitors to the home must sign in and out and no visitor is allowed unsupervised access to the building or 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 good.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The home has a written Statement of Purpose and a children's guide, which accurately describe what the home sets out to do for children accommodated. The Statement of Purpose is regularly reviewed to ensure it accurately reflects the services and manner in which care is provided in the home. The last review took place in July 2009. Matters of diversity and difference are reflected with underpinning statements in both broad and specific guidance and detailed procedures.

All staff are well managed and have detailed job descriptions that detail the expectations of their role. Staff say that they are clear of what their duties are and feel supported by the formal management structures. All staff have regular supervision which often exceeds the frequency set out in the national minimum standards. All staff in the home are sufficiently qualified and experienced to meet the needs of the young people accommodated and fulfil the services detailed in the Statement of Purpose. All staff undertake mandatory training and are supervised by senior staff. Training includes diversity awareness and equal opportunity training. Currently there are six staff members in the home, four of which have completed their National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at level 3 in caring for children and young people or equivalent. Further training continues in order to work towards meeting the national minimum standards recommendation that 80% of staff are trained. All staff follow work rotas to ensure that each staff shift has an appropriate skills and gender balance. Young people say that they know which staff member is on duty and are informed of any change of shift.

All staff receive mandatory training in key areas of their work and the home maintains a well managed training programme. All staff also receive refresher training or training specific to a young person's more specialist or diverse needs. Unannounced monitoring visits are carried out in the home on behalf of the provider and an action plan follows any identified shortfalls or need for improved practice. The manager also performs a review of the home against the Statement of Purpose and takes appropriate action to address any need to improve or adjust care practices. Auditing and review undertaken through these processes is well managed and includes well planned actions that follow. An acting manager is currently in the home and this person is qualified to NVQ at level 4.

Each young person has a dedicated private and secure record of their history and progress, which can, in compliance with legal requirements, be seen by the child, and by the child's parents.

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):

- ensure fire safety provisions in the home are regularly reviewed along with the implementation and effectiveness of action identified as a result of risk assessments carried out.(National Minimum Standards 26.3)
- ensure that areas are free from unnecessary or unreasonable risks (National Minimum Standards 26.2)
- ensure that a minimum of 80% of staff are qualified to National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in caring for children and young people level three or equivalent. (National Minimum Standards 29.5)