

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC023743
Inspection date	16/11/2010
Inspector	Mark Blesky
Type of inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	27/01/2010
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2010

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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 which can provide accommodation and care for three young people aged between 11 and 17 years. It is situated in a residential area close to a seaside town. There is a shopping parade close by and there is easy access to other local amenities. There are good rail and bus links with towns, schools and colleges.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

At this unannounced full inspection, all key standards were inspected. This is a good home with outstanding services for health. Young people are well supported in this home by staff that are insightful and motivated. Relationships are respectful and young people are encouraged to express their views and opinions. Care planning and review is well managed and staff work hard to ensure that each young person is supported and encouraged to develop and meet the goals of the placement.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection in January 2010, two recommendations were made.

The Registered Manager was asked to ensure that adequate records were kept of young people missing from the home and the use of sanctions and control. The Registered Manager has reviewed missing persons and absence from the home procedures to make sure the record keeping is robust. Detailed and comprehensive recording is now maintained along with appropriate action being taken in the event of absence from the home.

Systems of behaviour control and the use of sanctions have been reviewed. Well managed procedures in place to ensure that positive behaviour is effectively promoted within the home. 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 outstanding.

Young people are provided with healthy and nutritious meals, which are well prepared and served in adequate quantities. A wide range of choices are available and the young people are encouraged to plan menus and meals. Young people are given healthy eating advice and supported by staff that are trained in healthy living.

Young people make choices and express preference formally through house meetings and also during day-to-day discussions with staff. Young people are encouraged to try new and different meals; celebrations of festivals and other social occasions provide opportunities for this. Staff spend time and effort designing menus that are bright and colourful to promote interest in food and healthy eating.

All young people are supported by well managed healthcare planning. Young people have robust healthcare plans, which are regularly reviewed and maintained. All staff receive training and guidance in promoting health. This is developed with both broader care planning, and also more specific key working activities.

Each young person has a health profile additional to their general file to provide a useful summary of their salient health needs. Individuality and diversity are evident in all healthcare planning with young people expressing choice and preference where appropriate. Healthcare planning and support is exceptionally well managed.

Rigorous storage and security is provided to ensure that medication is managed effectively. All staff receive training in the administration and handling of medications. A qualified nurse provides ongoing consultancy for the home. Healthcare and planning is of a very high standard in this home.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people say that they are treated with respect and benefit from privacy and confidentiality. Staff knock on doors before entering bedrooms and are particularly sensitive around times of washing and dressing. A private telephone is available for young people to use and email and postage facilities are also in place for them to use.

A well managed complaints procedure is in place for young people to use. Staff will assist any young person raising a complaint or making representation and all complaints are recorded. Young people are kept informed of all stages of the complaint and formally consulted at the completion of the matter. If young people are dissatisfied with a complaint outcome, they are supported by an independent person to raise matters further.

All matters of safeguarding are referred to the safeguarding co-ordinator who has many years of experience in this role. To ensure staff are competent in this area, mandatory training is provided along with regular refresher training. An on-call service is available to support any matter that is more urgent and support from area managers is available to provide advice. The safeguarding procedures in the home mirror the principles of the local authority's guidance.

Anti-bullying procedures are in place to ensure that any matters of suspected bullying are addressed promptly. Guidance for staff details proactive measures such as recognising the signs and symptoms of bullying along with action to be taken if

bullying emerges. All staff have also undertaken training that specifically considers bullying and supporting young people who feel persecuted or disadvantaged.

If young people go missing from the home or are absent without permission, rigorous support systems are deployed. Action is taken to search, report and return any young person and the home maintains protocols of support with the local police.

All young people have specific risk assessment that details areas of vulnerability and risk when absent from the home. If absence presents additional risk or is uncharacteristic, an independent visitor arranges an interview to discuss this with the young person. Absence is uncommon in this home.

There are effective behaviour control procedures in the home. Typically, control is maintained by discussion and the supportive relationships between the young people and staff. Young people say that staff will always seek to discuss matters with them if they are acting negatively. This is reflected in key working sessions and more generally in house meetings. When discussions and advice are unsuccessful, the staff may use a range of approved sanctions to support improved behaviour.

Risk assessment is carried out to address a range of known behaviours and situations. Risk assessment is insightful and seeks to consider the impact of young people's behaviour upon risk, along with useful risk analyses. This provides appropriate individual and diverse assessment, which considers each young person's specific needs. Risk assessments are comprehensive and very detailed and provide staff with appropriate guidance to keep young people safe.

Health and safety checks and fire safety checks are routinely carried out. Fire evacuation drills are performed regularly and the home employs a fire consultant to maintain the building. Although fire safety records are generally well maintained, it was noted that the fire building plan did not detail all the fire equipment currently in place.

All staff members are recruited through rigorous employment and recruitment panels and all employment reference checks and statutory checks are undertaken. No staff member can work unsupervised with young people until checks are completed. All visitors to the home must identify themselves and sign and out of the building. No visitor is allowed to have unsupervised access to the home or young people.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young people benefit from effective day-to-day support in their interaction with the staff. Key working is planned to provide the young people with a good opportunity to meet formally with staff on a one-to-one basis. All key working sessions are planned to establish the purpose of the sessions. All sessions are recorded and include some useful analysis of the session.

Young people are encouraged to make individual choices and express their views about the care that they receive. Although key working is generally well managed, recording of some sessions appears inconsistent and lacks focus in a few examples.

All young people are encouraged to study and benefit from formal education. Staff regularly liaise with the schools and ensure that support from the home is available. Staff members, typically the key worker, attend the schools for open days and parental consultation evenings. Support is also provided by the staff to help with homework and any extra-curricular activities. Records are kept of all the young people's progress in education and a useful diary is maintained of all contact with the schools.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Care planning is very well managed in this home and young people benefit from effective and insightful planning. Each young person's care plan is integrated within the home's placement plan and this provides detailed and comprehensive support for each young person. In addition to this, each young person is provided with a 24-hour management plan, which seeks to provide detail of day-to-day needs.

Plans demonstrate the fine detail of care that is provided and consider how individual young people should be encouraged and supported. Plans demonstrate the individual and diverse needs of all the young people and provide insights to elements of behaviour that may impact on care planning. Review systems compliment this attention to detail and staff produce comprehensive review reports for all young people, prior to their statutory reviews. Reviews are well managed and it is evident that young people are engaged and consulted throughout the planning and review process.

Support is provided for all young people to have contact with their friends and family. All staff undertake training in supporting young people in order that they are aware of the importance of promoting contact.

Staff also provide assistance with transport and travel as well as emotional support to assist the young people in this important area.

All planned moves to and from the home are supported by staff and the manager. New admissions to the home are invited to meet all the staff and young people and take a meal in the home. Planned moves from the home include visits to the new placement and opportunities for the young people to express their views and choices. When emergency placements are made in the home, consultation takes place with all staff and young people. A review is conducted to assess the suitability of the placement and the views of the young people and staff are canvassed.

Young people's meetings or house meetings are regularly conducted in the home. Young people say that these meetings present them with a formal opportunity to express their views. Detailed records are kept of all meetings. Young people are able

to express and discuss individual and collective views regarding the operation of the home.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Young people are supported towards independency and provided with opportunities to develop skills towards adulthood. Plans are in place to support young people to learn skills through day-to-day experiences such as cooking, planning meals, and shopping. In addition, other elements such as employment, health, and education are considered in developing skills and knowledge.

Each young person has an initial skills assessment and then plans are put into place to construct programmes to support young people learning these necessary skills. Support for diversity and individual choices is evident and planning reflects this. Young people say that they are able to gain confidence as staff support them in this way.

The home is well maintained in most areas. Staff clearly work hard to make this establishment homely and comfortable for the young people. The furnishings and decoration has been completed with insight and young people say that the home is similar to a family home. Young people personalise their bedrooms and are able to express their views and opinions in all aspects of decoration of the home.

It was noted that the kitchen area was not as tidy as the rest of the home and presented evidence of being rather unclean in some areas.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Young people are provided with good opportunities to express their individuality and diversity. This is evidenced in care planning, review and day-to-day support from the staff members. Staff members encourage and promote young people to express their individual views, formally through dedicated meetings, and informally through and their day-to-day care.

The home has a written Statement of Purpose and young people's guide which accurately describe what the home sets out to do for the young people accommodated, and the manner in which care is provided.

There is a competent staff group to ensure that the needs of the young people are understood and met. Each shift is planned to ensure that there is an adequate skills balance, and out-of-hours and on-call services are provided.

All staff receive mandatory training in core areas of care and regular and frequent

refresher training is arranged. It was noted that the 80% of staff are not qualified to National Vocational Qualification in Caring for Children and Young People at level three. However, training schedules are in place to address this shortfall.

All staff receive supervision in accordance with their role and six-monthly appraisals are conducted to review staff performance. Inspections of the home and the home's performance are conducted by the manager and action is taken to address any undesirable trends or patterns of shortfall that are identified.

Each young person has a permanent and secure personal file, which is legible, up to date and provides a comprehensive history of his or her progress in the home.

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
24	take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment Regulation 32.1 (a).	31/12/2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home is kept clean (national minimum standards 24.3)
- ensure that all children are given individualised support in line with their needs and wishes, and children identified as having particular needs receive help, guidance and support when needed or requested (national minimum standards 7.1)
- ensure that 80% of staff are qualified to National Vocational Qualification in Caring for Children and Young People at level three or equivalent (national minimum standards 29.5).