

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC025395
Inspection date	21 December 2009
Inspector	Sonya Robinson
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	16 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

The home cares for children and young people from the ages of birth to 17 years. The home is divided into two houses close by one another.

The first is a large Victorian detached house set in substantial grounds and provides accommodation over two floors. The house is split into three groups and includes a mother and baby unit. The house has plenty of space for young people to access including shared and private space.

The second property is a modern detached property, and also provides accommodation over two floors. The house is well equipped and furnished to meet the needs of those living there.

Both houses are situated in a residential area within a village, close to leisure facilities, local amenities and transport links.

Summary

This visit was an interim inspection and was unannounced. One outcome area for young people was fully looked at during this inspection, which was staying safe, two further issues were also looked at under economic wellbeing as a follow up from the previous inspection. This inspection looked at the progress that the home has made with the recommendations made at the last inspection. These related to documentation for young people and health and safety issues.

The home continues to be a good service that meets most of the national minimum standards. Young people enjoy living there and feel cared for. Young people are looked after by a group of competent and skilled people. The staff place a great emphasis on young people's needs and supporting young people with their daily lives.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

No actions were made at the previous inspection. The home was asked to consider several points as a matter of good practice. These are as follows; to ensure that gas safety certificates are up to date. This has been completed. To ensure that each young person has a plan that would help them make the transition into adulthood. These have commenced and they are relevant to the individual needs of the young people.

The home was also asked to ensure physical restrictions on normal movement within the home, for example key pad locks on doors, are only used in relation to individual children to promote and safeguard their welfare. Physical restrictions must not impact on all children staying at the home. The home has taken action to ensure that this issue is addressed and this is monitored on a regular basis. Finally, the home was asked to ensure all unnecessary risks to the health and safety of children is identified and where possible eliminated, for example removing clutter from the upstairs landing areas. This has been completed. Though a tour of both buildings, revealed that the carpets and décor in both buildings are now looking worn and the back garden of the smaller house is in need of attention due to its uneven surface.

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's privacy is promoted. They have single bedrooms with their own keys. The accommodation provides space where young people can relax easily and spend time alone when they wish. Young people are able to make and receive telephone calls in private in line with any restrictions agreed with the placing authority. Staff respect young people's privacy, consistent with good parenting, and the need to protect young people. Confidential information is held securely in the office.

Information about young people's rights and how to complain is contained in the home's young people's guide. Young people know how to raise issues if they are unhappy and their concerns are taken seriously.

Young people's welfare is promoted and safeguarded. Bullying is something that is taken seriously and where there are issues these are dealt with promptly. The home has taken appropriate and decisive action to safeguard young people and work effectively with the relevant external agencies.

Staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities to promote and safeguard young people's welfare. They are familiar with the home's safeguarding policies. They provide a good level of supervision for young people based on their age to make sure they are safe in the home and in the community. Also, staff give young people good advice about personal safety. They work effectively with young people to try and ensure that they come in on time.

Young people have clear and consistent boundaries and know what is expected of them and what is unacceptable. Staff use effective communication skills to encourage young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour. They place a great emphasis on praising young people when they do well and reward them. Formal sanctions are used appropriately.

Staff help young people deal with their anxieties and frustrations in a positive way by encouraging young people to talk about how they are feeling and work out how to solve problems.

The home addresses health and safety issues with a range of risk assessments. They identify hazards in and around the home as well as risks faced by individual young people including those arising from activities and behaviour. Staff also carry out regular health and safety checks, for example, of fire safety systems to make sure that the home is a safe place to live. However, the emergency lighting system is not consistently tested, such as on a monthly basis.

The vetting of visitors and people wishing to work at the home is thorough to make sure young people are protected.

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 satisfactory.

Each young person has a plan that would help them make the transition into adulthood. These have commenced since the last inspection and they are relevant to the individual needs of the young people. Staff support young people to prepare for adult life by encouraging them to take more responsibility for themselves suitable to their age and understanding. Also, they are encouraged to develop their personal care, organisational and social skills.

A tour of both buildings, revealed that the carpets and décor in both buildings are now looking worn and the back garden of the smaller house is in need of attention due to its uneven surface.

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):

- maintain adequate precautions to protect young people, staff and visitors against the risk of fire, such as regular testing of the emergency lighting system (NMS 26.8)
- ensure that that the interior of the home is maintained and that the garden is well maintained and safe. (NMS 24.3)