

## Inspection report for Children's Home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC025695     |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 06/01/2011   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Seka Graovac |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Random       |

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|--------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 11/08/2010 |
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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**

The provider is a registered childcare charity and housing association. Its motto is being passionate about positive outcomes. The home offers periods of planned care to up to eight children and young people from 12 to 16 years old. The placements last between three and 18 months, depending on individual needs. The home also caters for emergency admissions for children and young people from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. It aims to create a caring, structured and stimulating environment that is responsive to the individual needs of children and young people. The home focuses on meeting the individual needs of young people within a positive group living experience.

This is an inner city service. It is situated close to many recreational and leisure facilities, local youth clubs, libraries and various places of worship, all within a community of diverse cultures.

At the time of the inspection, the home was fully occupied. However, none of the children and young people were available to speak to the inspector. This was due to six young people attending their education and two missing from the placement. Ofsted gathered the children and young people's views about the quality of the service through a written questionnaire.

## **Summary**

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection. It had two main aims: to follow up on the actions and recommendations from the previous inspection report and to reassess the quality of safeguarding in the home.

The main outcome of this inspection is that the home continues to provide a good service. A stable, care staff team is motivated and competent in promoting children and young peoples' welfare effectively.

However, the instability in the leadership of the home is having some negative impact on the administrative aspect of the service. An action was raised for the home to ensure that records of menus are kept. In addition to repeating the recommendation relating to young people's access to food and drink at night, a new recommendation was made for the management to improve on the quality of the record keeping in general.

## Improvements since the last inspection

The last Ofsted inspection was conducted in August 2010. That was a full inspection. The quality of the service was assessed in line with all key national minimum standards for children's homes and associated legislation. The home was judged as providing a good service with some outcomes for children and young people being outstanding.

However, two actions were raised: to ensure that no imposition of any financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum by way of reparation is used as a disciplinary measure on children and to ensure that Ofsted receives an application to register a manager for this service.

The home has taken appropriate actions to secure compliance with both requirements. Staff use appropriate sanctions as disciplinary measures on children and young people. They receive their financial entitlements regularly and are asked to pay a reasonable amount from their pocket money, only by way of reparation for the material damage intentionally caused.

Ofsted has received an application to register a person as the manager for this home. This person is undergoing Ofsted fitness procedure to register. However, all involved parties know that this is a temporary arrangement. Firm arrangements for another person to become a permanent manager for this home are in place.

In the previous inspection report, Ofsted recommended that the home reviews the arrangements for young people's access to food and drink at night and that the medication records are improved.

The home could not demonstrate that the arrangements for young people's access to food and drink at night have been reviewed. In the survey, young people indicated that they were happy with the food provision in the home. However, since the last inspection, some young people again contacted the police at night complaining that they were hungry. Although the inspector assessed the current arrangements to be reasonable, there is nothing to evidence that the home was working with young people to resolve what was for some of them, a contentious issue. The home was unable to even evidence how the information about the current arrangements for food and drink at night was shared with children and young people. Plenty of different kinds of food was available in the home at the time of the inspection. However, staff were unable to provide information on what would be served for dinner, later that day. In addition, no records of meals served were available for 10 days prior to the inspection. The children's homes regulations require the home to keep a record of menus served and to ensure that these are monitored by the registered person. A related action is raised in this report to ensure that this happens. The recommendation relating to the review of food arrangements has been repeated.

The home has improved its record keeping in relation to medication.

## **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.

The arrangements for health and safety are good. They include regular risk assessments and checks to make sure that the identified control measures are effective. A new fire safety panel has been recently fitted to ensure improved fire safety.

The organisation's robust staff recruitment procedure ensures that only staff suitable to work with children and young people are employed.

Staff have access to clear policies and procedures that appropriately promote safeguarding of children and young people in care. The written guidance covers in sufficient detail a number of situations that might arise in a children's home, such as dealing with complaints, with bullying, concerns and allegations of a child protection nature, with young people's challenging behaviour and when young people are absent without authority. Staff competencies are also supported by regular training that promotes good safeguarding practice. The training includes a number of topics, such as child protection, electronic safety, behaviour management, understanding gangs, first aid and health and safety.

The staff team is motivated, stable and experienced. Staff work well together within the home and with the external professionals, with the aim of securing the best for children and young people in their care.

Children and young people's welfare is promoted effectively. They receive appropriate support. They live in an environment that is free from bullying and intimidation. They report that staff are fair and that they feel comfortable in approaching them with any issues. They receive appropriate encouragement to engage in constructive behaviours, such as attending schools and colleges.

As the fourth person in less than a year takes on the home manager's position, the staff reported feeling a bit unsettled. Being very committed to achieving high professional standards in their work, staff have not allowed those feelings to impact negatively on the actual care practice. The home continue to provide a physically and emotionally safe environment to children and young people.

The organisation has good systems in place for appropriate and secure record keeping, as well as for confidential information sharing. However, as the staff focuses primarily on implementing the best practice in their actual work with children and young people in an unsettled environment, some minor weaknesses are evident

in some of the records kept. For example, the incorrect date on the missing person's form, the numbers not in order on the children's register and not entirely clear records of external complaints.

### **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.

## **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.

| <b>Std.</b> | <b>Action</b>                                                  | <b>Due date</b> |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 10          | keep a record of menus served. (Regulation 29.1.Schedule 1.10) | 14/01/2011      |

### **Recommendations**

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

- review the arrangements for young people's access to food and drink at night (NMS 10)
- improve on the record keeping in the home in general. (NMS 34)