

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Elaine Clare
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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 children's home is a detached Edwardian house. It provides care and accommodation for up to six young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, aged from 10 to 17 years. The accommodation includes a lounge, dining room, kitchen and single bedrooms for the young people. The home is close to all amenities and has good access to public transport.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection and all the young people were at school. The focus of the inspection was to look at staying safe, staffing within organisation and to assess whether any previous recommendations and actions made had been met. Judgements remain the same as the last inspection report if not fully inspected. All previous actions and recommendations have been addressed well by the Registered Manager.

The home ensures that the safety of the young people living there is given staff's full attention, and policies and procedures are in place which help to support this. The home has received two recommendations and no actions.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection in September 2010 six actions and five recommendations were made. All have been addressed to meet the National Minimum Standards. Medication is checked weekly by a designated staff member and all staff's knowledge has been refreshed in medication handling. Medical consent has been obtained for all young people resident.

A clear audit trail can be traced for complaints made to the home, with the investigation outcome available to be seen. Each young person has a placement plan in place and is aware of the current plan of care. The plan is reviewed regularly and young people's views are central to the reviewing process.

The Statement of Purpose clearly states the admission criteria is to provide a medium to long-term care home. Regulation 33 and 34 reports pick up each month any failing of the home in meeting National Minimum Standards and these are then addressed by the manager and her team.

The recommendations focused on attaining young people's views on restraints, sanctions and any disciplinary action taken against them. This has been implemented

and young people's views could be clearly evidenced. The Registered Manager has attended safeguarding training. The night staff and part-time staff have taken part in a fire drill.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people's privacy is being respected and protected through the staff team's implementation of clear policy and procedural guidance. Confidential information is being appropriately stored and information is only shared with those who need to know.

Young people know how to complain and make representations. The home's process is presented in a written format suitable for the young people's understanding. Written records demonstrate that received concerns are taken seriously, although most complaints are dealt with informally. There have been three complaints made from neighbours. All have been resolved amicably. The home can also provide an independent visitor if requested.

Young people are effectively protected from potential and actual sources of harm through the application of robust safeguarding procedures. All staff receive child protection training, which is annually updated. The Registered Manager of the home has also been updated in safeguarding procedures. Records indicate that appropriate action is taken in response to disclosures, as well as suspected and actual incidents of child protection concerns. The Trust commissioned an independent investigation into a recent allegation. The report is detailed and suggested a number of areas to improve practice. However the Trust has currently chosen to delay taking action on the recommendations made, choosing rather to focus on the inadequacy of the investigation. Staff know what to do in response to an allegation or disclosure of abuse and are confident in the whistle-blowing procedure.

Disagreements and friendship issues are speedily resolved and staff are quick to implement the prescribed guidance which is in place. Risk assessments describe the measures in place to protect the young people from potential sources of bullying. This topic is routinely revisited through staff training and meetings for staff and young people.

Staff are vigilant in knowing the whereabouts of those in their care and take immediate and appropriate action in the event of a young person attempting to leave, without authority. There have been few recent occasions of young people having been absent without authority from the home which is a significant

improvement from the last inspection.

Staff implement positive role modelling of behaviour and conduct. This is achieved through speaking and behaving respectfully between themselves and also towards the young people. The implementation of prescribed sanctions and physical interventions is now being monitored to meet the previous recommendation made. Along with this, the new log books ensure a complete and accurate log of any restraints is being kept including views of the young people. All staff receive appropriate training and guidance before being deemed as competent to implement such methods. Risk assessments and individual behaviour management plans detail clear and specific guidance for staff to follow.

Young people live in a safe physical environment. Robust health and safety systems are regularly implemented and audited; maintenance issues are swiftly addressed. Staff and young people understand the fire evacuation procedure and practise this regularly. Young people are suitably protected from visitors to the home by effective monitoring and the staff recruitment process is robust. The staff files are not kept at the home but at the head office, no new staff have commenced working at the home since the last inspection.

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 satisfactory.

While the registered manager has made every effort to achieve continuity of staffing, so that young people's attachments are not overly disrupted, over the past few months this has not always been achieved. Key staff members have resigned from their posts or are on long term sick. This has resulted in agency staff and staff from other homes within the company being used to cover.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Recommendations

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

- review and take necessary action on the recommendations made following the recent independent safeguarding investigation which gives clear guidance to ensure that members of staff subject to allegations against them are supported (NMS 17.6)
- make every effort to achieve continuity of staffing so that children's attachments are not overly disrupted. (NMS 30.3)