

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Monica Hargreaves
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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

This children's home is owned and managed by a charitable organisation that has several homes in the area. It provides medium to long-term care for up to three young people of either gender, aged from 11 to 17 years.

The house is a semi-detached property in a residential area. It has four bedrooms and a bathroom on the first floor and a lounge, dining room and kitchen on the ground floor. One of the four bedrooms is used by staff who sleep in. The staff office is in the basement and also doubles as a second staff sleep-in room. The home has parking facilities at the front and there is an enclosed garden to the rear.

There were three young people living at the home at the time of the inspection. One young person was present during the visit.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This unannounced interim inspection was undertaken to assess key standards in the outcome area of staying safe. Recommendations made at the last inspection were also considered.

The home continues to provide a good standard of care to young people. Safeguarding is given a high priority and the service has effective arrangements in place to ensure that young people are cared for safely. There are robust procedures in place to protect young people; these are understood and followed by staff. Staff are qualified and appropriately trained. They have a good understanding of the individual needs of the young people they look after and they work well to meet those needs and to keep young people safe. Relationships between young people and staff are good and young people are supported to behave in ways that are socially acceptable.

The home itself is kept safe because there is a robust system of checks that are kept up to date and the accommodation provides a homely and well maintained environment for young people.

No actions or recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

Recommendations made at the last inspection are all met.

The service has an up-to- date assessment of the risk of bullying in the home, which ensures that all areas of potential concern are addressed and risks to young people are minimised.

The number of staff who have gained a National Vocational Qualification at Level 3 has increased and over 80% of the staff are now appropriately qualified.

There is a team development plan that is reviewed annually and that confirms the current operation of the home.

Areas of the home have been redecorated and refurbished so that young people benefit from living in a homely environment that is well maintained and comfortably furnished.

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.

Staff work well to ensure that the privacy of young people is respected. They always knock on young people's doors and ask permission before entering and they manage information in a way that protects confidentiality. Young people have access to a phone that they can use in private.

Complaints are managed effectively through the organisation's clear procedure. There is evidence that young people understand how to make a formal complaint and that they feel confident about raising issues with staff. Two complaints have been made by young people since the last inspection. Records confirm that these have been responded to promptly and that young people are satisfied with the outcome.

The welfare of young people is safeguarded because all staff are trained in child protection issues and there is a clear safeguarding procedure to guide their practice. Staff understand the individual needs of the young people they care for and know how to respond in the event of any allegation or serious concern about a young person's safety.

Young people are protected from bullying in the home. They are made aware that bullying is not tolerated and staff talk to them individually and in house meetings about the impact of bullying and the rights and needs of others. Risk assessments and appropriate levels of supervision enable staff to support young people effectively.

The service has a clear protocol for managing unauthorised absences that protects young people. Staff make sure that individual risk assessments are kept up-to-date so that there is good communication within the care team. They work in close partnership with the local police and other relevant agencies if young people go missing from the home. They are proactive in arranging multi-agency meetings to discuss specific concerns relevant to individual young people. This enables them to ensure that information is shared appropriately and strategies for protecting young people are agreed.

Young people are encouraged to develop appropriate and acceptable behaviours. Staff promote a culture of positive behaviour within the house which includes rewards and incentives for young people. Challenging behaviour is managed effectively and appropriately to protect all young people and staff. Behaviour management plans identify possible triggers for individual young people as well as the strategies that staff employ to support and protect them. Staff are trained to manage challenging behaviour including in techniques of physical intervention. This is only ever used as a last resort and there have been no incidents that have resulted in a physical restraint since the last inspection. Relationships between young people and staff are good. Staff provide firm and fair boundaries and treat young people with respect. Young people respond well to the way that staff work with them.

Health and safety matters are managed effectively to ensure that young people are kept safe. All fire, electrical and gas equipment is regularly checked and serviced. Staff are trained in fire evacuation procedures and health and safety matters and there are regular fire drills to ensure that staff and young people know how to respond in an emergency.

Recruitment procedures are robust, ensuring that all staff are thoroughly vetted before they start work at the home. Visitors to the service are checked and their whereabouts in the home are monitored. These systems protect young people from individuals who may pose a risk to them gaining access to the home.

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.