

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC029504
Inspection date	01/02/2011
Inspector	Mark Ryder / Judith Longden
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	18/05/2010
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2011

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 home that provides medium- to long-term placements for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is registered to take up to four young people within the age range of eight to 17 years. The home is situated in a residential area and is close to bus routes and local amenities. The house is an older property and has a lounge, dining room, reception room, a resource room, toilet and an open-plan kitchen on the ground floor. All bedrooms are on the first floor and are single. The staff office is also situated on the first floor as well as the young people's bathroom. There is a garden to the front and rear as well as a patio area. Four young people are currently in placement and three contributed to this inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection that focussed upon the safety and welfare of young people. No other outcome areas were checked. Previous recommendations were also assessed. The home continues to offer a very high standard of care to young people with complex needs. Staff are clear about their role in supporting young people to live well and enjoy life. Young people report that they like living at the home, relate well to the staff and feel they are respected. In view of these findings the original outstanding judgement remains from the full inspection in May 2010.

There are two recommendations made at this inspection both of which are minor but identified to further improve the practice of the home. The reasons for room searches being carried out are not always fully recorded. Therefore, young people do not always know and understand why their room was searched. Risk assessments are not in place for hazardous substances. Whilst such products are always locked away, the lack of data sheets for staff to follow in the event of an accident or misuse could potentially put young people at risk.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were two recommendations made at the last inspection. Both have been met.

The manager was asked to record that young people are always asked if they wish to see a nurse or doctor within 24 hours of being restrained. Records now clearly reflect this. Young people, therefore, are fully aware of their rights to be medically examined if they so wish.

The manager was also asked to record and maintain regular testing of emergency lighting, fire alarms and fire fighting equipment. Weekly checks are now completed to ensure the environment remains safe for young people, staff and visitors.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Staff ensure young people are safe and well during their placement. Privacy is respected and sensitive information confidentially managed. Young people feel and are safe. A young person said that staff always knock on their bedroom door before they enter. However, room searches are not clearly documented as to the reasons for the search. This means that young people are not always fully aware of when and why such searches are made.

Young people are aware of the complaints procedure. Staff address concerns in a timely way and record factual and accurate accounts of the reason for the complaint. A young person said 'how to make a complaint was explained to me when I first arrived at the home'.

Relationships between young people and staff are friendly, supportive and good natured. There is an open culture within this home that enables young people to freely talk about their feelings or concerns. Young people say the rules are fair. Behaviour management records are regularly monitored. This ensures there is good management oversight of how staff manage young people's behaviour.

Staff feel confident in managing safeguarding concerns. Regular training, access to local procedures and discussion during team meetings all support staff in identifying and responding to such incidents. There is a whistle-blowing policy that staff are aware of. Therefore, staff understand that they can discuss any concerns outside of the organisation if they feel they need to.

Young people say that bullying is not a concern at this time. Resident meetings regularly raise this issue to ensure that young people can talk openly and honestly with each other, for example regarding the use of name calling and poor language. Risk assessments provide staff with current information on the vulnerability of young people to bullying. It refers to such issues as gender and age. This reduces the likelihood of bullying within this home.

Staff follow the home's reporting procedures and check the local area if young people are missing. In such an event all efforts are made to locate young people and

to make sure they are safe and well. Young people are welcomed once they return and given an opportunity to discuss the reasons for going missing. Staff report that by doing this they have identified some patterns to why young people go missing and are addressing this.

There are regular safety checks to the fire alarm system, fire equipment and emergency procedures. Fire evacuations and drills ensure staff and young people know how to respond appropriately in the event of a fire. Annual testing of portable electrical appliances maintains a high level of safety. Although all potential harmful cleaning products are locked away not all have been risk assessed in the event of accident or misuse.

There is a safe recruitment process that enables young people to be cared for by staff that have been appropriately vetted before they start work at the home. Visitors sign in and out of the building and identification checked. Such practice protects young people whilst in placement.

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?

Recommendations

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

- ensure all searches are documented showing the time and the date and the reasons for the search, noting what if anything was found, who carried out the search and who was present at the time. Such records should be signed by all those present (NMS 9.8)
- ensure risk assessments are carried out, recorded in writing and regularly reviewed with regards to the control of hazardous substances. (NMS 26.2)