

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Paul Taylor
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	25 August 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

Kestral House is owned by My Choice Children's Homes Ltd. It is a detached town house in a residential area. There is a garden to the rear of the house, and communal areas such as a dining room, kitchen and lounge on the ground floor as well as a staff office.

Staff sleeping in accommodation and the young people's rooms are situated on the first and second floors. The home caters for young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties from the age of 10 to under 18 years.

Summary

At this unannounced inspection all the key standards in the areas of being healthy, staying safe, and organisation were assessed. The home provides a high standard of care to the young people who have complex and challenging needs. The staff team work very hard to ensure that care and support are delivered in a detailed and sensitive manner. The team is very well managed and systems operated in the home ensure that monitoring assesses the standard of care on a regular basis. Whilst health care plans and health needs are met to a very good standard, records of medication storage and administration are not always accurate.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The home continues to work towards having at least 80% of the staff team with the National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. This recommendation remains from the last inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The young people are offered a healthy and varied diet. All the young people's particular preferences and dietary needs, whether based on health reasons or cultural reasons, are known and met. Young people are given choices of menus and are encouraged to help prepare meals and to do chores such as clearing away and washing up. The young people are assisted and encouraged to prepare their own meals especially as they grow older and are developing their independence skills. All staff receive training in food handling in order to ensure that high standards of hygiene and food safety are maintained.

The health care needs of young people are met in a robust and individualised manner. Each young person has their physical, medical and emotional care needs assessed and incorporated into detailed health care plans. Health care plans incorporate any previous or current medical issues, immunisation records and clarify how any such needs should be met by staff. Liaison with the Looked After Child nurse ensures that young people have their statutory medical examinations completed, whilst routine appointments such as to the dentist or optician are planned for and facilitated. All young people are registered locally with a General Practitioner with very good records of appointments kept.

All young people have consents in place for receiving first aid, emergency treatment and having medication given to them. All medication is stored securely in the office. Whilst the home has a clear system in place for the recording of administration and receipt of medication, records of medicines received into the home and given to young people are not always accurate. This could lead to wrong doses of medication being administered or medication being used without a record of this occurring.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The home has suitable policies and procedures in place relating to confidentiality. All confidential information is kept securely stored. There are very clear and detailed guidelines for the staff to follow with regards to room searches, sharing confidential information and entering young people's rooms.

The right of a young person to complain about their care in the home is made clear to them on their admission to the home. The young person's handbook gives clear guidance to the young people about who they can complain to and their contact details. The young people's right to voice their opinions about their care is valued and promoted. Numerous formal and informal opportunities are in place for the young people to communicate their thoughts and feelings.

All members of staff receive training in child protection and all are aware of what to do and who to speak to if they have concerns about a young person's welfare. Additionally they have access to local safeguarding procedures and the organisation's child protection policy. Detailed records are maintained on any child protection concerns and how they have been pursued and resolved. External monitoring of child protection issues by senior managers ensures that there is a robust and sensitive approach to this issue.

Staff are very mindful of the need to address bullying issues amongst young people in a rigorous, yet thoughtful, fashion. The atmosphere in the setting clearly encourages openness and respect with a zero tolerance attitude toward any bullying behaviour. The dynamics in the home are closely monitored and any incidents are addressed promptly both in group meetings and in individual sessions.

Excellent risk assessments are completed that highlight the risk young people may be to themselves or others with clear plans and strategies in place to reduce any identified concerns. Clear and detailed protocols are instigated to safeguard young people who leave the home without permission. Liaison is maintained with the police, especially if a young person is deemed to be particularly vulnerable if missing. Young people are engaged on their return and given the opportunity to discuss the reasons that they went missing.

The challenging and risky behaviours of young people are considered and planned for comprehensively. All young people have individualised behaviour management plans which focus on their particular issues, such as absconding, anger management or substance misuse.

The complex behavioural needs of the young people living at the home are responded to in an individual, well planned and sensitive manner. All young people have completed behaviour support plans, individual to their particular issues, which are tailored to address their personal anxieties, fears and frustrations. Staff respond appropriately to challenging and aggressive

behaviour in a calm and measured fashion, clearly understanding the behaviour of the young people in their care.

Where sanctions are imposed they are clearly recorded and endorsed by both the manager and the external manager who carries out monitoring visits to the home. The date when sanctions will finish is not always made clear in the sanctions record. This could lead to young people being unclear as to when they may not be subject to a sanction.

In the event of physical restraint occurring, a record is kept of the incident and this is also checked by the home's manager and external managers to ensure that the use of physical intervention was appropriate. Records of restraint are detailed and include how the incident was resolved. All members of staff are trained in the method of restraint used in the home.

The health and safety of all those who live and work at the setting is promoted and protected to a very high standard. All required servicing, tests and checks are undertaken in regard to fire fighting, gas and electrical equipment. Regular fire alarm and emergency lighting tests are completed with routine fire drills taking place within required timescales.

The homes comprehensive recruitment process requires all prospective staff to undertake a Criminal Records Bureau check, provide references and undertake an interview. Additionally the young people are part of the recruitment process and provide feedback to recruiting managers after they have met prospective candidates.

Thorough monitoring systems, combined with staff awareness and commitment, ensures that the well being and safety of the young people is promoted to an excellent level.

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 outstanding.

Comprehensive information is provided for young people and others which gives details of the home and the services it offers. All young people are given a copy of the young person's guide on moving into the home which is well thought out and easily understood.

Staff receive considerable support and guidance, whilst being trained and encouraged to take on delegated tasks and responsibilities. Adequate numbers of staff are deployed to care for the young people during the day and night. Young people are very well cared for by a staff team who are committed and suitably experienced. Staff receive regular supervision and are very well guided in carrying out their tasks. They clearly understand the needs of each young person and receive very good induction and training. Continued professional development opportunities are made available and the organisation is keen to support and encourage their staff to develop their learning and practice. The organisation runs a program of training for all

members of staff to achieve National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. All members of staff have either attained this qualification or are partaking in it, however, the home is yet to attain a ratio of 80% who have achieved the qualification.

The organisation completes routine monitoring visits to the home which are robust and thorough. The subsequent reports provide an objective review of care provision and where necessary highlight areas in need of improvement. Monitoring of care plans and records is of a very high standard.

The young people's care plans are very well organised, regularly reviewed and updated and are subject to thorough checks by the key workers, supervisory staff and manager. All information is securely stored.

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
13	ensure that an accurate record is maintained of all medication administered or received into the home. (Regulation 21 (1))	25 December 2009

Recommendations

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

- record the length of time that a sanction starts and ends (NMS 22)
- ensure that a minimum of 80% of the staff team achieve NVQ Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People or an equivalent qualification. (NMS 29)