

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	19 April 2010
Inspector	David Kidner
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	16 November 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

The home is registered to provide a service for up to eight children and young people of both sexes with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, from the age of 13 years up to the age of 18 years.

The home is a large purpose-built detached bungalow located close to local facilities and services. The accommodation is arranged into four distinct living areas comprising two separate single bedroom self-contained flats and two other larger living areas. Each larger living area has all appropriate facilities and has four single bedrooms. There are adequate bathing and toilet facilities throughout the home and the home is decorated and furnished to a good standard.

Summary

The main purpose of this unannounced interim inspection was to ascertain the progress that the home has made in meeting the actions and recommendations made at the last inspection. The outcome group staying safe was also assessed.

The home continues to provide a good standard of care to children and young people who live at the home permanently and for those who access the service for short breaks. Staff are very committed to providing a high quality service. The home is very proactive in addressing the behaviours that some children and young people may present and works in partnership with families and other professionals.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection actions were made to ensure that the service updates care plans and risk assessments to reflect the current needs of children and young people. The home has addressed these matters and now ensures that care plans and risk assessments are updated regularly.

An action was made to ensure all staff employed at the home receive regular formal supervision and annual appraisal. This has not been met.

Recommendations were made in relation to the storage of medicines, the completion of documentation relating to Schedule 6 of the Children's Homes Regulation 2001, and to ensure that staffing levels are reviewed, so that children are provided with regular opportunities to access activities and leisure opportunities outside of the home.

The service has made every effort to relocate the storage of some medicines to ensure that they are not being stored at temperatures above the recommended guidance. However, the service is not maintaining records of the temperature in order to monitor this. The Registered Manager now completes the documentation relating to the monitoring of the care the children are receiving. The service is reviewing staffing levels as recommended, but due to the current needs of the service, staff are reporting some difficulties in further promoting activities out of the home.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The service is proactive in ensuring that medicines are appropriately stored as per recommended guidance. However, the service is not keeping records of the temperature that all medicines are stored at in order to monitor this.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The service promotes privacy and confidentiality. The home has adequate bathing, showering and toilet facilities that are homely in appearance and meet the needs of the young people. Appropriate locks are fitted for privacy and safety. Children and young people have access to a telephone in order to make calls in private. However, most young people require support in this area.

The service has a robust complaints procedure. There has been one recorded complaint since the last inspection. Records viewed and discussions with staff confirmed this has been satisfactorily resolved.

The welfare of children is promoted and children are protected from abuse. There have not been any matters relating to child protection. All staff receive safeguarding training and refresher training is provided when needed.

Staff spoken with confirmed that bullying is not an issue at the home. Staff are in sufficient numbers to ensure that more vulnerable children are appropriately supported when staying at the home. Staff are provided with guidance entitled 'Bullying: Guidelines for individuals working with children with disabilities'.

The service has detailed policies and procedures in relation to sanctions, behaviour management and the use of physical intervention. Minimal sanctions are imposed and these are audited on a regular basis. The home records the use of physical intervention appropriately. The Registered Manager audits all of the records relating to incidents, physical intervention and accidents. The home is very proactive in addressing the behaviours that some children and young people may present. Where needed, the service works very closely with families and healthcare professionals, such as psychiatrists and psychologists, to address behaviours and develop behaviour management guidelines and protocols. These are regularly reviewed and meetings are held to review agreed approaches. All staff receive training in de-escalation techniques and the use of restraint.

Health and safety and fire safety are promoted in the home to protect young people from environmental hazards and keep them safe.

The service has a robust staff recruitment and selection process which safeguards young people by ensuring only those adults who are suitable are employed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The home ensures that care plans are updated regularly to reflect the current needs of children and young people.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The service makes adjustments to staffing levels according to the individual and collective needs of the children and young people accessing the service. At present due to the needs of the service, permanent staff are working extra hours, and relief and agency staff are being used. Staff spoken with feel that they have adequate numbers of staff on duty but at times this may not always allow the ability to take children on as many outings and trips out of the home, as they would like.

Not all staff are receiving support and guidance in safeguarding and promoting children's welfare by receiving regular formal supervision and an annual appraisal. However, some staff stated that they are receiving informal support and supervision as and when needed.

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
28	ensure that all staff employed at the home receive regular formal supervision and annual appraisal. (Regulation 27 (4) (a))	30 September 2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure that records are maintained of the temperature that all medicines are stored at, in order to ensure the temperature does not exceed recommended guidance (NMS 13.10)
- ensure that staffing levels are continually reviewed in order to provide children with regular opportunities to access activities and leisure opportunities outside of the home. (NMS 30.4)