

Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC031504       |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 10 August 2010 |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Thomas Webber  |
| <b>Type of Inspection</b>      | Random         |

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|--------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 29 March 2010 |
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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**

This home provides care and accommodation for up to 10 children and young people, aged five to 17 years at any one time who have a learning disability and who may also have a physical disability. The home provides overnight short breaks.

The home is divided into two units each catering for a different age group. One unit primarily provides care for five to 12 year olds with the other providing care for 12 to 17 year olds. However, there are times where both groups of children and young people mix together for activities, meals or outings when appropriate.

The home is situated in an urban residential area and has its own transport facilities. These provide opportunities for children and young people to access the wide range of amenities in the local and wider community.

### **Summary**

This unannounced, interim inspection covered the key standards for children's homes with particular reference to staying safe. The actions and recommendations identified at the previous key inspection were also checked to ascertain whether compliance had been achieved. This forms part of the annual inspection programme to examine the standard of care and services provided to young people. At the time of inspection, seven young people were accommodated.

The home continues to provide a good standard of care to children and young people, which ensures that good outcomes are achieved for them. This is supported by documentary evidence seen and observations made.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Two actions and three recommendations were made at the last inspection. Both actions have been complied with. These related to addressing the deficiency relating to the heating and hot water supply to the home and making sure that a written record is made of any complaint, the action taken and the outcome of the investigation. Two of the recommendations has been fully complied with. These relate to ensuring that a full written record is maintained of all sanctions and restraints and that continuity and consistency of care is achieved on a daily basis. The third recommendation remains as further improvements are required in respect to staff supervision.

### **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 respect the children and young people's rights to privacy and dignity which are balanced with the need to offer them the protection and safety they require. Most children and young people require some form of care and support, including help to meet their physical needs.

Children and young people's records are stored securely and staff understand the need to keep their information confidential as well as being clear about the limits of confidentiality.

Clear policies and procedures are established for dealing with complaints. This procedure is produced in user-friendly formats for children and young people. Parents/carers are encouraged to raise any concerns they have about the children and young people's care. Two complaints have been received since the last inspection. Records show that all complaints are now recorded in the complaints log and provide sufficient information. All complaints are responded to and addressed without delay. One compliment of appreciation has also been received about the care and support provided by the staff.

Children and young people live in a safe environment where their welfare is promoted. Staff have a very good understanding of their needs and how to safeguard them. Suitable policies and procedures are in place in respect to child protection which comply with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures. All staff have received child protection training.

An anti-bullying policy is established which ensures the protection of children and young people from bullying.

Staff remain vigilant and are aware of the need to monitor specific combinations of children and young people and the effect their behaviour can have on each other. An anti-bullying resource pack is available and is used with individuals or with groups of children and young people depending on their ability and understanding to work through the effects of their behaviour.

Children and young people who are absent without authority are suitably protected. A clear system is established for the reporting and recording of any event should they go absent without consent.

Clear guidelines, protocols and strategies are established to manage the challenging behaviour of children and young people. The home is pro-active in identifying triggers so that staff can take positive action to help children and young people to manage their behaviour more appropriately. A positive handling plan is established for those children and young people who have specific challenging behaviours. Children and young people's negative behaviours are regularly monitored, recorded and dealt with in an agreed way by staff. Staff receive physical intervention training which is used as a last resort unless it has been identified as the agreed strategy to deal with the specific behaviours of children and young people. All records of sanctions and restraints are now suitably recorded.

Robust health and safety policy and practice guidelines are in place to ensure that the staff, children and young people are appropriately safeguarded. Children and young people and staff regularly practise fire evacuation procedures and the various fire prevention records are accurate and up to date.

Robust staff recruitment practices are established for the protection of children and young people. New staff do not commence employment in the home until all the relevant checks have been carried out.

## **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 good.

Children and young people are looked after by a staff team who are themselves properly managed and supported in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Daily handover meetings are held to ensure that staff are kept up to date with regard to any issues relating to children and young people. Although staff receive regular formal one to one supervision, this is still not provided at intervals in line with best practice.

The home is committed to providing sufficient staff on duty to meet the individual and collective needs of the children and young people. This is achieved by normally providing between three to four members of staff on duty within each unit throughout the waking day. However, the staffing levels maintained are dependent on the number and needs of children and young people accommodated at any one time. Two members of waking night staff are on duty with one member of staff sleeping-in each night. The staffing arrangements for evening and morning routines have been reviewed to improve the continuity and consistency that children and young people receive in line with best practice. This is achieved during school holidays and at weekends, although it is more difficult to maintain during term-time.

Children and young people live in an environment where they enjoy positive and relaxed relationships with staff who are themselves very committed to providing a high level of care. Staff carry out their duties in a caring, respectful and attentive manner. Children and young people were observed to be relaxed and at ease in the company of staff and within their environment.

The authority ensures that the care and welfare of children and young people are continually monitored. This is achieved by monthly unannounced monitoring visits being undertaken by the home's team manager within the authority. Reports are produced outlining these visits and any action needed to improve the outcomes for children and young people.

The home is usually managed by two Registered Managers as part of a job share who are both suitably qualified and experienced. However, one manager continues to be seconded as team manager within the authority and appropriate arrangements have been put in place to cover this. The home's manager is supported by a deputy and four seniors which enable them to effectively monitor the day-to-day care provided to children and young people.

## **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 |
|----------|--------|----------|
|----------|--------|----------|

## Recommendations

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

- ensure that all established staff working in the home receive at least one one-to-one supervision from a senior member of staff each month and that new staff receive this fortnightly during the first six months of their employment. (NMS 28.2)