

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Anthony Kyem
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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

The home provides care and accommodation for up to five young people of either sex from 11 to 17 years of age. The home is situated in a quiet residential area and benefits from good access to local amenities. This home fits in with neighbouring properties and has no distinguishing features. Young people are accommodated in single bedrooms, which they are free to personalise.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was a full unannounced key inspection. The visit was used to look at the home's capacity to meet the outcome areas for young people under the Every Child Matters framework. The home is judged to be a good service, with identified areas of excellent practice.

Staff, despite the challenges posed by the residential task, remain highly motivated and committed towards helping young people to do well. They support young people in times of crisis and they provide encouragement and support when needed most. The home is well managed with effective leadership.

Staff are well trained, qualified and experienced. They have a good understanding of the needs of young people. They work alongside other professionals to provide young people with the right types of individual support. Young people's views about life within the home were both complimentary and positive.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were no actions resulting from the previous inspection. Appropriate records are now maintained for conducting room searches, as was previously recommended at the last inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

There are good arrangements in place for the promotion of young people's health. Young people are provided with healthy, wholesome and nutritious foods to promote their physical health and well-being. They are provided with good support and advice on healthy living which encourages them to lead healthy lifestyles. Young people are supported to develop an awareness of any health issues of relevance to them.

Young people are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians and they receive medical support when they need it. They have good access to specialist health workers, if they require additional support. Their health progress is recorded and records show the promotion of young people's good health. Young people have annual health needs assessments and individual healthcare plans, which are appropriately completed to cover their health and development.

There are effective procedures in place to ensure that medication is stored, administered and disposed of safely.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff follow procedural guidance in relation to the secure storage of young people's confidential information. They respect young people's privacy and they protect their sensitive information. There are good arrangements in place for young people to wash with privacy and dignity.

The home has a complaints procedure which young people are made aware of, so they know how to complain. Young people have access to the children's rights service, which enables them to raise their complaints independently. Young people have staff available to them who they trust and feel able to turn to for support.

Young people's welfare and safety are promoted and there are good arrangements in place to ensure that young people are safeguarded and protected. Staff are trained in safeguarding to help them recognise and report suspected abuse. Bullying is not tolerated and young people are actively encouraged to show respect for their peers.

Unacceptable behaviour is challenged and there are good supervisory arrangements in place to enable staff to detect and deter bullying behaviours. Young people spoken to did not feel that bullying was an issue for them. Where young people absent themselves without authority, there are effective systems in place to promote their safe return. Serious occurrences are reported to the relevant authorities, in line with the home's responsibilities to do so.

Staff are trained to manage young people's behaviours safely and this includes the use of physical intervention, if required. Where restraints have occurred they have been conducted fairly and appropriate details of the restraint are maintained. The home focuses on rewarding positive behaviours to build young people's self-esteem. Young people earn credits to reward them for their achievements and credits are linked to the development of positive behaviour.

There are good systems in place to promote health and safety. The home's fire fighting equipment and portable electrical appliances are all professionally serviced and there is routine testing of the home's fire safety systems to ensure these are operational and in full working order. Regular safety checks are undertaken by staff

at the home.

Safe recruitment procedures are followed to ensure that young people are protected. All staff have an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check, which means that their suitability to work with children is carefully assessed before they are employed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Young people receive outstanding support. Their needs are fully assessed and services are provided to meet and promote their welfare. Young people have good access to a wide variety of professional services to meet their identified needs. A specialist nurse for looked after children, as well as child psychologists, provide support and advice for young people and consultation and training for staff.

Every young person has an allocated link worker, who they can turn to for individual support. The support provided through key working is extensive and effective. The relationships between young people and staff are excellent and these provide the platform on which outstanding work is being undertaken.

Young people value and enjoy their relationships with staff and they say that they enjoy living at the home. They described the home as being 'a wicked place to live', with staff being a strong feature in making the home an enjoyable experience for them.

Staff work hard to promote and maintain young people's education. Most young people attend mainstream school where they are doing exceptionally well. Others receive and are actively encouraged to pursue alternative forms of education, in line with their particular needs and aspirations. Staff consistently reinforce the value of education and they keep young people educationally motivated. Staff recognise that care and education are important in providing young people with stability, consistency and safety.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young people are provided with placement plans, which are individualised and reflect their needs. Plans are clearly written and informative. Contact is promoted and this is seen as an important part of every young person's life. By promoting contact young people are able to sustain their unique relationships with their close friends and family.

The home works closely with a wide range of external services, which are used to support young people and meet their assessed needs. Young people's needs are regularly reviewed and their views are taken into consideration. Young people are encouraged to attend their review meetings and to influence any decisions made

about them and their future.

Young people say that they are consulted and feel fully involved in the running of the home. They get to meet with staff through resident group meetings, which enable them to share their collective views about life and the running of the home, although not all planned meetings are well attended. Young people have excellent relationships with staff and this enables them to share their views and opinions on a daily basis. Direct work sessions with staff also provide further opportunities for young people to be consulted. Each month the home produces a newsletter to update young people and keep them informed.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The home is well maintained and is decorated and furnished to high quality standards. It provides young people with a clean, well maintained and functional home. Young people's bedrooms are personalised, appropriately furnished and well presented.

There are enough washing facilities within the home to meet the privacy needs and numbers of those resident. Two lounge areas give young people good amenities for them to socialise. Both rooms are extremely well resourced with flat screen and satellite televisions. One room also contains a personal computer.

The home is situated near to a local park which provides good opportunities for young people to play. Young people benefit from the location of the home and the extensive range of facilities available to them, which are easily accessible.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff are well qualified, experienced and trained. All have completed their National Vocational Qualification in Caring for Children and Young People at level 3 or above. Training is regularly undertaken to enable staff to develop their knowledge and skills.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The staff composition is diverse in terms of their age, gender and ethnicity. Equality and diversity are firmly embedded in practice, which means that all people are treated fairly, with dignity and respect. Young people are taught to be respectful of difference and to be tolerant and understanding of other people's faiths, cultures and traditions.

Young people receive support in developing their own unique identities. They receive advice, encouragement and support in shaping their own views of the world, to promote the development of positive attitudes and values. Young people receive continuity of care to enable them to form and develop trusting relationships.

There are good arrangements made for reviewing the quality of care. The manager of the home routinely monitors all of the home's administrative systems to make sure that care is delivered in an efficient and effective way. External monitoring also contributes towards improving the home's performance, with independent reports prepared for the home, in relation to its conduct. All reports are sent to Ofsted, but not all were available within the home, which limits the ability of the manager to take action on any shortfalls identified.

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 that regulation 33 reports are submitted to the home within a reasonable timescale to enable the manager to take action on any recommendations made. (NMS 32.1)