

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	2 July 2009
Inspector	Anthony Kyem
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	10 December 2008
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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 provides care and accommodation for up to five young people of either sex from 11 years old up to 17 years old. 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 inspection of the home was unannounced. All key national minimum standards were inspected. The visit was used to assess the home's capacity to meet the outcome areas for young people in relation to being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, achieving economic well-being and organisation.

The home is a good service, with many positive features. Some areas of practice are outstanding. The arrangements for young people to be consulted and involved are extensive. Young people are provided with genuine opportunities to be consulted. The quality of care and support given to young people is outstanding. Young people value the support provided to them by dedicated staff.

The standard and decorative repair of the home is good. Young people's bedrooms are personalised and their views on the accommodation are valued and routinely considered by staff. Young people's views about the home are very positive, 'Staff are strict, but they're also very fair and really good fun. They're kind and caring. I'd rate the home somewhere between seven or eight out of 10'.

There are no requirements made as a result of this inspection. Two good practice recommendations have been made for the Registered Person to consider, to improve the recording systems in respect of young people's risk assessments and the foods consumed by them.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Statutory notifications are now made to Ofsted, in accordance with the home's legal responsibilities. Young people now have appropriate plans in place, to support them in making the transition towards their eventual independence.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The home's food menus show that young people receive a well balanced diet. Menu planning is diverse and considers young people's likes and dislikes in relation to foods, including any religious, cultural or special dietary needs. Most, but not all meals consumed by young people are recorded. This allows staff to monitor young people's dietary intake and provides encouragement and support to those young people who do not eat healthily. Young people

are consulted about the foods they eat and opportunities are provided for them to plan, prepare and cook their own meals to enhance their independence.

The health of young people is positively promoted by staff. All young people are registered with local healthcare services. Young people who require specialist support, receive support through the provision of specialist health workers to promote their physical, emotional and sexual health.

Staff have the authority required to attend to young people's individual health needs. Medical consent is obtained from those with parental responsibility. Medication kept within the home is stored and administered safely and staff are trained to administer emergency treatment, where required.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people confirm that staff show respect for their privacy. Young people's private records are securely stored for confidentiality. No concerns were raised by young people in relation to their care. Young people feel the home is a good place for them to live.

Staff are familiar with the home's policies and procedures for promoting young people's welfare and safety. This ensures that young people are appropriately protected from bullying, exploitation and abuse. Staff are trained in child protection and have a clear understanding of their duties and responsibilities towards safeguarding.

Bullying is not currently an issue for young people to be concerned with. Where bullying has occurred, staff manage such situations positively, through effective team work, planning and appropriate levels of supervision. There is excellent communication between young people and staff, which means that young people feel able to approach staff with their concerns. Where young people absent themselves without authority, staff know what to do and follow agreed procedures to promote their safe return. Missing person's records are clearly recorded and all significant events in respect of young people are notified to the appropriate authorities.

Positive behaviour is actively encouraged. The home is currently reviewing the effectiveness and use of consequences and rewards. Relevant training is being provided for staff, to enhance their practice in providing quality care. All staff are trained in behaviour management and this includes the safe use of restraint.

Health and safety is actively promoted. Annual safety tests to fire, gas and portable electrical appliances have all been undertaken within the required timescales. Fire evacuation tests are regularly held, so that young people are clear and familiar with the instructions in place, to evacuate the premises safely in the event of a fire.

Young people are protected through robust recruitment practices. All staff undergo appropriate vetting prior to them working within the home. Such checks ensure that those employed to work with young people, are safe to do so.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Young people receive outstanding levels of care and personal support. Staff are highly motivated and this is evident in the work they perform. Young people receive the right types of support and make excellent progress because of the care and support provided to them.

Young people value the stable and trusting relationships they have built with staff. Key working is used effectively to support young people. Individual achievements are acknowledged and negative behaviours are challenged, to help young people learn from their experiences.

Young people's educational achievements are celebrated and valued, with superb educational outcomes evident for them. Young people are actively encouraged to attend school and to pursue their ambitions, through further education or employment. Young people have access to the internet and provisions are in place for young people to study and learn.

Staff are very open minded and receptive towards improving the way they work. They are currently in the process of receiving specialist training to strengthen their evaluative thinking and reflective practice. A strong emphasis is placed on acknowledging young people's positive behaviours, by offering unconditional support, encouragement and praise to enhance young people's self-worth, whilst reviewing the ways in which negative behaviours are viewed and managed. Staff strive to improve their performance, to promote excellent outcomes for young people.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young people have personalised care plans, which are detailed and outline young people's individual needs for support. Staff implement young people's care plans effectively, to meet their identified needs. Risk assessments whilst written well, contain little evidence of identified risks being formally reviewed.

Statutory review meetings are held within the required timescales. Young people and their families are encouraged to attend and contribute their views. This ensures that young people are involved in any important decisions made about their lives. The arrangements for contact are promoted and the home ensures that young people have regular contact with their families, including overnight stays, wherever possible. Restrictions in contact are clearly recorded and understood by staff.

Consultation between young people and staff is purposeful. Young people are actively encouraged to influence the way the home is run. There is a consultation box, which young people use anonymously. Regular visits are made by the Children's Rights Officer and there are regular resident's group meetings and individual key worker sessions, all of which provides excellent opportunities for young people to be consulted and heard.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The home is decorated, maintained and furnished throughout, to good quality standards. The home provides young people with a comfortable, safe and well equipped modern home. The home comprises of two separate lounge areas, which are used by young people for recreational, social and domestic purposes. Each young person has their own private bedroom, which they are free to personalise.

To the rear of the home is a grass lawn and to the front is parking facilities for the home's private vehicle. Off the road parking is available for staff and visitors to the home. The location of the home ensures that young people have good access to a wide range of local amenities and community facilities.

Young people are trusted and they are able to take controlled risks to promote their independence. Staff actively support young people to acquire the skills needed for them to make the transition towards adulthood successfully. Young people are encouraged to cook, make their own appointments and undertake routine household maintenance tasks, so that they become more independent. Young people of the required age, all have individual pathway plans and have completed the home's skills for life training.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The composition of the staff team is culturally diverse and responsive towards meeting young people's individual and collective needs. There is recognition of young people's individuality and needs arising from gender, culture and ethnicity. There is a positive commitment amongst staff, to ensure that none of the young people suffer discrimination or disadvantage. This means that all young people receive the same equal treatment and opportunities within this home. Staff provide care without favouritism or prejudice, so that young people feel valued as individuals, respected and involved.

The home's statement of purpose provides useful information about the home. The children's guide is written in a child friendly format and collectively both documents meet the regulations and standards. The information provided for young people, ensures they know what to expect from the home.

Staff are very experienced and all have qualifications in social care. Young people receive continuity of care and there are stable relationships between young people and staff. This means that young people's needs and daily routines are consistently and successfully maintained. Staffing levels meet the numbers and needs of those young people resident within the home.

Routine checks are made to evaluate the home's performance. These are consistently undertaken in accordance with the home's legal responsibilities and contribute towards the smooth and efficient running of the home.

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 Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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Recommendations

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

- consider the need to record and monitor all main meals consumed by young people (NMS 10)
- revise and where appropriate review young people's risks assessments (NMS 2.1).