

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC032496
Inspection date	12 August 2009
Inspector	Anthony Kyem
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	18 February 2009
--------------------------------	------------------

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Cripins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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 a local authority children's home for six young people of either gender, aged from 11 years old up to 17 years old.

The home is a purpose-built, detached children's home situated on a private residential estate. The accommodation provided is over two floors. On the first floor, there are individual bedrooms of which one has been converted to be used as a gym, staff sleep-in accommodation and two bathrooms with toilet and shower facilities are also provided. On the ground floor, there is a lounge, dining room, quiet room, art room, laundry, kitchen, toilet facilities and three offices.

To the rear of the property, there is an extensive, enclosed grassed garden with a patio area. To one side of the garden is the home's allotment. The home has good access to public transport links, nearby towns and cities.

Summary

The inspection of the home was unannounced. The visit was used to assess the home's performance in meeting the outcome areas for young people in relation to staying safe and achieving economic wellbeing and to monitor compliance with the actions and recommendations made at the previous inspection.

The home is a good service, which continues to provide care for young people to high standards. The accommodation provided for young people is safe, clean, tidy and spacious. Much thought and effort has gone into the making the external features of the home less distinguishable, so that the home is not identifiable as a children's home. The cosmetic appearance of the home is equally as impressive with the hallways softened through the use of decorative wallpapers to create a homely feel.

Whilst there are no actions made as a result of this inspection, one good practice recommendation has been made to improve the promotion of welfare.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

No requirements or recommendations were made as a result of the home's previous inspection.

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.

Young people have their privacy respected by staff. Washing facilities provide young people with good facilities to wash independently and privately of others. Confidential information held about young people is treated confidentially by staff to protect them.

There have been no formal complaints made by young people since the home's previous inspection. However, young people do know how to complain and they confirm they are confident that any complaint made by them, would be dealt with fairly and effectively.

Young people confirm that bullying is not an issue for them to be worried about and discussed having positive relationships with their peers. Staff supervise young people's activities appropriately to ensure that young people's behaviours are closely monitored. The home has a zero tolerance policy towards bullying which is actively discouraged.

Staff receive training in child protection to ensure they are able to protect young people from harm, however, such training does not routinely include basic child protection training for domestic staff. This means not all staff who have direct contact with children are suitably trained to promote their welfare.

There are a number of issues with some young people absenting themselves without authority. However, staff clearly understand and follow the home's missing persons procedures to promote young people's safe return. Records held in respect of missing from home details the action taken by staff to promote young people's welfare and safety.

Staff are able to manage young people's behaviours safely and they receive training to enable them do this effectively. Permissible forms of control are used to encourage young people to think about the consequences of their actions. Where sanctions have been used, they have been used fairly. Young people spoken to generally thought the home's rules were fair and consistently applied.

The promotion of health and safety within the home is managed well. There is regular testing of the home's fire fighting equipment and fire drills are held frequently to ensure that young people know how to evacuate the premises safely in the event of fire. Safety tests to gas and portable electrical appliances are each held within the recommended timescales. Recruitment practices are thorough and this ensures that those employed to work with children are safe to do so.

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 good.

The home is situated close to local amenities and community facilities. Young people enjoy the social benefits of living near to facilities of interest to them. The home is a spacious property which is well maintained, decorated and furnished. The house is kept in a good standard of decorative repair both internally and externally. There are well tended gardens to the front and rear of the home .

Young people are provided with their own private bedrooms, which they are able to personalise with their own private possessions and personal belongings.

The home provides good standards of quality living accommodation for the young people, which includes a lounge area, kitchen, dining area, quiet room, study rooms and a room specially converted as a gym.

Organisation

The organisation is not judged.

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 there are provisions available, for all staff including domestic staff, to attend child protection training (NMS 17.8).