

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Trevor Hall
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Date of last inspection	11/08/2010
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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 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

This home is operated by a local authority as part of its residential provision for children with disabilities. The home is registered as a children's home for up to six young people at any one time and offers short break care only for children and young people with severe learning and/or physical disabilities. Young people of either gender, between the ages of five and 18 years can use this care facility. The service is operative for 43 weekends a year and for five weeks scattered through the school holidays. Currently there are over 20 children and young people using the service throughout the year. When inspected the home was fully occupied, with six young people in residence, none of which were able to take an active part in the inspection process.

The unit is on the ground floor of a two-storey, detached building which was purpose-built originally as a children's home. The upstairs accommodation is used by an area social worker team attached to the Disability Services Team.

The centre is situated within a short bus ride of local amenities and has a large, soft floored outside garden and a play area suitable for those who use a wheelchair. The rear of the centre has views over open land and is not overlooked. There is off road car parking to the front of the building.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection that concentrated on key national minimum standards in the every child matters area of staying safe. Six young people were in residence, all were present during the inspection. No new actions or recommendations have been raised following this inspection.

The overall judgement for this service remains good. Young people are being looked after by a competent well-trained team of staff. The Registered Manager provides strong and consistent leadership that is focused on meeting young people's needs. Young people receive an excellent level of care and support because staff are enthusiastic and well informed about their needs and circumstances. The home demonstrates a strong commitment to ensuring the young people are able to enjoy their lives and achieve their potential. Young people, receive high quality care, where good individual support is available and their health and well-being is seen as paramount.

Improvements since the last inspection

No actions or actions or recommendations for improvements were made at the last 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 using this service are protected by well planned and effectively implemented safeguarding arrangements. The home's records supported by discussions held with the manager demonstrate a good working relationship with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. There are clear and accountable processes for recognising and responding to any concerns. There are robust staff recruitment procedures and young people are kept safe by staff who are well trained in safeguarding children procedures, first aid, behaviour management and health and safety.

Information held on behalf of all young people is correctly stored in lockable facilities. Staff are aware of their responsibilities to promote privacy and confidentiality and their practice is consistent with the local authorities policies and procedures. Young people's rights to privacy are respected and reinforced with clear information in care plans which inform staff about how young people prefer to be supported with personal care. Young people can have their own private space and there is a good balance between ensuring young people's personal care needs are met and that they are safe.

Young people's and the views of their parents or carers are valued with an accessible and responsive concerns/complaints procedure in place. Information about how to express views, discuss concerns or make a complaint is made known to young people and families when they are first linked to the service and also reinforced by information displayed in the home. Some young people at the home have complex communication needs, however staff provide a variety of ways to facilitate young people's communication, including symbols and photographs. Records show that concerns and more formal complaints are dealt with effectively and are used to develop and improve the service and outcomes for young people.

Bullying behaviour is not a predominant issue within the home, however, the home does have an effective countering bullying policy. Young people are protected from the actions of others by planning admissions, high levels of staff supervision and by staff having an in-depth awareness of the needs and behaviours presented by the young people in residence. Staff provide regular and specific feedback to young

people about their behaviour with a clear focus on setting fair and reasonable boundaries. Young people are assisted to understand what is expected of them and they are rewarded for good behaviour. Very few formal sanctions or physical interventions are used in the home's behaviour management strategies. Young people spend limited time together, they are well supervised; their days are well planned giving them opportunities to take part in a variety of activities.

None of the young people currently using the service have a history of going missing. Due to their individual needs and vulnerability young people do not go off the premises alone. There are, however, appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure staff know what to do if such a situation should arise.

Individual and group behaviour is creatively and consistently assessed and managed. Young people's behaviour is assessed in individual behaviour plans with information about challenges, triggers and management strategies. These plans are discussed and drawn up with parents and placing social workers. The make up of groups of young people coming to stay are closely monitored to ensure that all young people can enjoy their stay, maintain positive relationships with each other and individual behaviour management plans can be supported. Young people are encouraged to express their individuality and develop social skills.

Young people live in a home that provides for their physical safety and security. Close supervision of young people is an important and a prominent feature in the way staff manage perceived risks and the young people's vulnerability. A strong focus is also given to management of their health and safety. There are appropriate risk assessments for all aspects of the safety of the premises and grounds.

The records kept in the home show that robust procedures are in place to protect young people from fire. All the fire systems are tested regularly, however, it is unclear if the home's fire risk assessment has been reviewed with the frequency required. Staff and young people undertake fire drills as required. Relevant certificates show that regular servicing and maintenance is completed on all equipment. Certificates of Public and Employer liability are displayed as required.

The home's manager ensures that utilities and domestic equipment are checked to ensure they are safe to use. The safety and welfare of the residents is taken seriously and young people live in a home which is generally both physically safe and secure.

The home has robust procedures in place for the monitoring of visitors to the home. Staff personnel files were not available on the inspection date, as they are held centrally at the human resources department. The local authority has a clearly defined recruitment process. This protects young people by ensuring that all of the national minimum standards are met, prior to any staff member being deployed into any of their homes. A written record of this process is maintained for inspection and is followed in respect of all staff currently employed.

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 not judged.

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 positive steps are taken to keep children, staff and visitors safe from risks from fire and other hazards by ensuring that the home's fire risk assessment is reviewed annually. (NMS 26.1).