

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Caroline Brailsford
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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 one of four registered children's homes owned by the company and provides residential placements for three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The home is situated in a rural setting close to a town where a range of leisure and community resources can be accessed. The home has large gardens, single bedrooms and provides pleasant and spacious communal areas. The staff team have use of a dedicated vehicle to support the care of young people.

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. The main purpose of the inspection was to inspect all of the national minimum standards in the outcome area staying safe, and to check progress on the one action and three recommendation made at the last inspection. The outcome judgement for staying safe is good.

The home's strengths include the staff team who are well established and competent. They are very caring in their approach and enjoy being with the young people and watching them progress. As a consequence, young people are well supported and make good progress. Young people benefit particularly because of the positive relationships that they forge with staff. The young people feel confident about the complaints procedure and staff ensure that they can have their say about what is happening in the home and in their own life.

The one action set at the last inspection has been achieved. One out of the three recommendations set at the last inspection has been achieved. For the second recommendation, regarding the windows to the home, there has been substantial progress but as this is not yet achieved the recommendation will be repeated. The third recommendation set was in respect of the checking of fire doors, this has not been achieved and will therefore be repeated.

As a result of this inspection there is one action and one recommendation set.

Improvements since the last inspection

The one action at the last inspection has been achieved and there is now a separate designated sleeping-in area for the staff.

One out of the three recommendations from the last inspection has been achieved.

There is now a risk assessment completed for each young person regarding the risk of bullying.

There was a recommendation at the last inspection regarding the windows not being maintained to a satisfactory standard of decorative repair. The manager has ensured that he had pursued this and now has funding for this work to be carried out. He is, however, waiting for the warmer weather to complete this job. This recommendation has therefore been repeated.

The recommendation from the last inspection regarding regular testing of the fire doors has not yet been completed. This recommendation will therefore be repeated.

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 are safe in this home because staff develop very positive relationships with them. This allows young people to explore their safety issues and think about the overall impact of their actions. For example, some young people were at high risk because of the high level of missing from care incidents when they first came to the home. However, staff have enabled young people to see that this is not safe, and have worked with them very closely to explore these issues. As a result of this support, young people are safer and the events when they become missing have significantly decreased.

Young people are confident that they can raise a complaint or issue in the home and that this would be appropriately managed by the staff or manager. The positive relationships that young people have with the staff, allow issues to be resolved as they arise.

Risk assessments outline the individual risks for young people and help to protect them because staff are extremely familiar with the required information.

Behaviour management in the home is extremely positive and the respect between staff and young people and high staffing ratios, allow young people to make excellent progress in this area. The young people are very clear about behaviour that is expected of them and are confident that sanctions and staff responses to behaviours is fair.

Young people enjoy their privacy in the home and staff always knock on doors prior to entering their rooms.

Staff understand what they should do when there is a safeguarding issue in the home and it is clear that all important information is shared with the relevant agencies to ensure young people's safety and welfare.

The required checks take place on the fire alarm system in the home and the manager ensures that all staff and young people practise fire drills. However, one fire door to a bedroom was found to not fit the frame. This has the potential to compromise the safety of young people should there be a fire. Other checks on the safety of the building have taken place. For example, the electrical hard wiring and the gas safety checks. However, Portable Appliance Testing has not been carried out in the last 12 months in line with the home's own risk assessment.

There is a clear documented record of the recruitment process for all staff in the home. The manager ensures that, despite the personnel record being kept centrally in the company, he completes a file to evidence all the required information. This ensures the safety of the staff to work with the young people.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

This outcome was not fully inspected. However, it is clear that there are game station games in the home that are played by young people who are younger than the age intended.

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?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Std.	Action	Due date
26	ensure that all parts of the home to which young people have access to, are free from hazards to their safety, this is in particular relation to the home's own risk assessment regarding Portable Appliance Testing. (Regulation 23 (a))	04/03/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the interior and exterior of the home are maintained in a good state of decorative repair, this is in particular relation to the windows (National Minimum Standard 24.3)
- ensure that there is regular testing on fire equipment in the home, this is in particular relation to the fire doors (National Minimum Standard 26.8)
- ensure that video games/consoles and computer games are watched only by young people of the intended age range. (NMS 15.8)