

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	28 October 2009
Inspector	Caroline Brailsford
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	10 June 2009
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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

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

This is an unannounced interim inspection. The purpose of the visit is to assess the key standards under staying safe from the national minimum standards, and also to check progress made on actions and recommendations raised at the full inspection of the home on 10 June 2009. A judgement of satisfactory has been made under the heading staying safe. Strengths of the home include the procedures with regard to the safety of young people, which are robust. Behaviour is also well managed and staff know the needs of young people well. As a result of this inspection there are 3 actions, one regarding health and safety checks on gas and electricity which are overdue. One action is regarding the laminate to the windows which looks unsightly, and one action is about the safeguarding policy set out in the home's statement of purpose which is inadequate. There are 4 recommendations made as a result of this inspection. These are regarding locks on bedroom doors which do not provide privacy, and the complaints procedure where young people are not clear about how they can complain about the manager or the registered person. There is also a recommendation about the detail in risk assessments which does not always reflect the high level of detail that staff undertake in practice. The last recommendation is regarding the provider not ensuring that young people receive the last Ofsted report, or young people's summary also prepared for them by Ofsted.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection there were three actions. Two of these actions have been met. Work has taken place to ensure that risk assessments contain all aspects of young peoples health. Also staff are now clear about the safeguarding procedures in the home. The third action was regarding the statement of purpose which did not contain information about the arrangements for surveillance in the home. This information has now been added to the document and is clear. However the third action also referred to the arrangements set out in the statement of purpose for safeguarding. This information has not been added, therefore the action will 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 satisfactory.

Young people enjoy privacy in the home and have their own private bedroom. However, one young person does not have a key to their room and another bedroom door can be easily opened without the key. This has the potential to affect privacy and the security of personal items.

Young people know how to use and are familiar with the complaints procedure in the home. However despite information being in the welcome pack, they are not confident about the process should they want to make a complaint about the manager or registered person. However, staff always help them with any complaints ensuring that they have a voice about the care that they receive.

Staff are clear about the risks that young people present. Risks are clearly identified, well managed and robust processes help to ensure the safety of young people. There is a clear procedure identified in each young person's risk assessment for if they go missing. Staff are very familiar with the steps that they should take to ensure that young people are as safe as possible. However the risk assessments do not always reflect this high level of detail.

The staff are trained in safeguarding and are clear about what they should do if there is a safeguarding issue. For new staff, a thorough induction process ensures that knowledge in this area is appropriately developed. Staff are very clear about what the risks and issues are for individuals, so that the young people are as safe as they can be. There are procedures for safeguarding, but the statement of purpose does not include this in sufficient detail as the regulations require.

Young people enjoy good relationships with staff. The staff see them in a very positive light and try to understand the reasons for behaviours so that support can be given prior to an incident escalating. Staff have completed training and are competent in diffusing situations to try to avoid the use of physical intervention. There is an emphasis on positive intervention and de-escalation. Where physical intervention is needed it is the last resort and recorded in a bound book providing an account of the event. Staff are patient and calm in their approach and try to find the route of the problem so that young people can progress in their overall behaviour.

The building appears to be safe and checks are regularly carried out on fire equipment. The fire risk assessment and regular fire drills ensure that risks are minimised and that young people and staff know what to do if there is a fire. This in turn ensures the safety of all who use the building. The three yearly test for electricity in the home is overdue by 6 months and the annual check on the gas is 7 months overdue. Potentially, this could put the young people and staff at risk.

The recruitment system in the home is robust and maintains good levels of safety for young people. This includes Criminal Records Bureau checks at enhanced level, proof of identity and references prior to employment.

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.

This outcome has not been fully inspected. However at this inspection the laminate covering at windows to the property looked dirty, stained and scratched.

Organisation

The organisation is not judged.

This outcome has not been fully inspected. However at this inspection it is clear that the young people have not seen either the full report or their own summary of the last inspection sent to them by Ofsted. They are therefore unaware of the judgment rating and of how the home is meeting the national minimum standards and Children's Homes Regulations.

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
26	ensure that all parts of the home are free from hazards to the safety of young people. This is in particular relation to the tests on gas and electricity (Regulation 23,a)	27 November 2009
24	ensure that all parts of the home are kept clean and reasonably maintained. This is in particular relation to the windows to the exterior of the property (Regulation 31,2,e)	27 November 2009
1	Include in the Statement of Purpose all matters listed in Schedule 1. (Schedule 1, point 17)	27 November 2009

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the young people's privacy is respected. This is in particular relation to the locks and keys to the young people's bedrooms (NMS 9.1)
- ensure that young people's risk assessments identify action to be taken to reduce and avoid unnecessary risks. This is in particular relation to the detail in the risk assessments (NMS 26.2)
- ensure that the home's complaints procedure provides appropriately for the handling of any complaint made against the manager or the registered person of the home (NMS 16.3)
- ensure that copies of inspection reports by Ofsted are made available to all young people in the home. (NMS 33.6)