

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC033919
Inspection date	18 February 2010
Inspector	Tola Akinde-Hummel
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	15 September 2009
--------------------------------	-------------------

© Crown copyright 2010

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 children's home is owned and run by a local authority and provides short breaks for children and young people aged five to 19 with learning, sensory and physical disabilities. There are five beds available in the home to provide overnight and holiday stays.

The home provides a block booking period that covers week long stays during the summer holidays.

The home is situated on an estate close to transport links. It has local amenities a short distance away. All children were about to embark on a trip out at the beginning of the inspection. As this was a half-term holiday children and young people were receiving day care only.

Summary

This unannounced interim inspection looked at how the home has addressed recommendations made at the previous inspection. The visit looked at the outcomes under being healthy, staying safe, and economic wellbeing. Enjoying and achieving, positive contribution and organisation were not inspected.

Staff continue to play an important role in ensuring that children and young people maintain optimum health during their short break.

The staff demonstrate their commitment to communication and building good relationships with children and young people, professionals and families.

Activities and trips which staff organise provide stimulation and improve personal skills.

The managers and the staff team remain proactive in identifying and promoting improvement to the service and offering value for money.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The manager was asked to consider the redecoration of the home due to wear and tear. This has been achieved. The home now has a brighter, fresher look and is more welcoming to children and young people.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children and young people continue to be provided with a varied and nutritious diet. Children showing interest in particular foods are supported to explore these. Children and young people like to eat out. This is encouraged and good table manners are reinforced.

Staff are very knowledgeable about the health needs of children and young people that they support. They maintain good relationships with health professionals and are able to react effectively in emergency situations. One comment included, 'the staff do brilliant work with all families and cope well with children with high needs. This includes epilepsy and tube feeding.

They have even trained staff to ensure they can meet the needs of children coming into the service.'

Staff have recently received training on disability in adolescents to further enhance their understanding of the issues young people face.

Staff are trained in the administration of medication. Medication errors are rare. Where these occur a full investigation takes place, all relevant parties are informed and managers undertake further observation of staff to ensure they are competent to administer.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children and young people can be confident that their privacy and dignity is respected. Children and young people are taught the difference between public and private spaces. This promotes independence, personal safety and appropriate social behaviour. Personal information is maintained in a confidential manner.

The home has not received any complaints since the previous inspection. Where there have been complaints in the past, these have been investigated and completed in a timely manner. Children and young people are able to make their feelings known through general discussion with staff, children's meetings and statutory reviews. All comments and complaints are taken seriously.

Staff have recently received training in the protection of children and this was designed in relation to their client group. Staff know what action to take should any concerns arise which are of a safeguarding nature. One social worker commented, 'staff contribute to child protection plans, come up with good ideas to help and follow-up any actions agreed.'

Children and young people do not experience bullying in the home. Regular reinforcement of acceptable behaviour and kindness to others plays a vital part in minimising bullying. Through consultation, children and young people have developed an 11 point charter outlining what is important to them. Not being bullied and not being allowed to bully is among them. This is prominently displayed in the home.

Children and young people receive high levels of supervision. This has meant that there have been no incidents of absence. Procedures are in place that staff are familiar with should they be required.

Records of sanctions and restraints are minimal. Detailed individual behaviour management guidelines, a commitment by staff to follow these and input from other professionals have supported positive changes in behaviour.

The home continues to ensure robust risk assessments are in place to protect children and young people. Health and safety checks and tests are up-to-date. Children and young people know what to do in the event of a fire. This is demonstrated through records of fire drills and children's meeting minutes. Visitors to the home are monitored and no access is permitted to children and young people from strangers.

The home has not recruited any new members of staff as yet. Previous robust recruitment procedures and checks will apply ensuring staff identified are suitable to work with children and young people.

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.

Children and young people go shopping for personal items and are escorted by staff. They have the opportunity to purchase items in the shops of their choice. Any toiletries or clothes are purchased by individuals according to their preference. This supports independence training and the handling of money.

Children and young people are able to purchase magazines and journals they are interested in. These are provided by the home. During block bookings money is provided by parents and carers to contribute to outings. This is kept separately and recorded and checked by the deputy manager. All parents and carers are issued with a receipt detailing the amount of money given and sign for the balance and receipts returned following a short break.

The home is in the third phase of its redecoration project and this should be completed shortly. The colour schemes remain the same and were chosen by children and young people during the previous project some years ago. The next project on the agenda is the transformation of the garden. Aiming High funding will ensure that new play equipment is available in the garden and this will allow greater access and participation to wheelchair users. Children and young people have been involved in the planning of the garden, using catalogues and colour charts to choose equipment. A social worker stated that, 'consultation with children and young people is regular and some equipment and games provided have been a direct result of this'. The manager and deputy have also consulted with occupational therapists around the design, equipment and accessibility of the plans.

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

There are no recommendations.