

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Tola Akinde-Hummel
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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 Crispins, 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 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

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 has recently increased the numbers of children who access the service. The home provides day care during the half term and Easter holidays.

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. Seven children were using the service as day care provision during the inspection. Two young people participated in the inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This interim inspection looked at the area staying safe under the Every Child Matters outcomes. Children and young people are kept safe during their stay in the home. Close working relationships with the field social work teams enable good communication to take place reducing any delay in sharing pertinent information. The home also has excellent relationships with parents which allow parents to trust in the staff team to provide consistent care to their children.

The staff are empowered to make decisions about the service provided to children and young people and take responsible risks. This is within the context of enabling children and young people to experiences activities they may not normally have access to.

Improvements since the last inspection

No actions raised from 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 outstanding.

Children and young people can be assured that staff know how to undertake intimate personal care tasks in a sensitive way. Staff have recently completed refresher training in intimate care and personal support. Staff maintain the dignity of children and young people at all times.

Parents, children and young people can be confident that any complaint raised will be fully investigated and addressed in an open and transparent manner. The team use any complaint as a learning opportunity to ensure similar issues do not recur and service is improved. One complaint has been received since the previous inspection.

Staff undertake safeguarding training on an annual basis. Safeguarding policies and procedures are updated and these are discussed with staff periodically. Staff have demonstrated a high degree of vigilance with regard to safeguarding matters. Where appropriate, staff take action with the support of the managers. One senior member of the social work team added, 'They are very quick at identifying issues, sharing them and allowing us to do work with families, and follow up concerns with the safeguarding officer. They inform us by telephone and email.' The managers meet quarterly with the social work team to discuss case priorities and explore issues.

The staff team organise short breaks in a way that minimises the risk of bullying. Risk assessments identify areas that may challenge the service and highlight where additional staff may be required to maintain safety and security. This is of particular relevance for children and young people who may go missing from the building or during an activity. The home has good procedures and guidance in place to manage this including the risks associated with using different forms of transport. Staff always remain vigilant and are knowledgeable about the individual characteristics of the children and young people they are working with.

Careful planning, detailed risk assessments and excellent policies and procedures assist staff to manage any activities on offer. The home has introduced horse riding and grooming and swimming to their list of activities for children and young people. These have been explored with the full cooperation of parents and carers and fully risk assessed. Staff debrief at the end of all activities sessions to share the experiences of the day and how they may do things differently or undertake successful activities again. This reflection assists staff to build on ideas and develop the service they provide.

Staff receive training in physical intervention, distraction and de-escalation techniques. Staff seldom use physical intervention or sanctions as a means of control when managing challenging behaviour. This demonstrates how well staff engage children and young people and are sensitive to their moods. Staff ensure the safety of all children and young people is maintained at all times. The authorities physical intervention officer said, 'The home is quick to develop the service to meet the child's needs, they are a learning organisation with a strong and supportive management

team. An indicator of how good they are is that they have increased their capacity to support children and their numbers of physical interventions has halved'.

A robust approach is taken concerning all aspects of health and safety in the home. There is a detailed list of all tasks to be carried out on a weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual basis. These are managed carefully ensuring that no checks or maintenance visits are overdue. All repairs are identified and addressed swiftly. This level of organisation ensures that children and young people are properly protected inside and outside the building.

The home follows the local authority procedure for recruitment and selection which outlines that all staff must be appropriately vetted before they are considered suitable to work with children and young people in the home.

Security in the home is good. The home is not accessible to strangers and all visitors are required to sign into the building and are accompanied around the home if children and young people are present.

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.