

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	27 July 2010
Inspector	Thomas Webber
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	4 January 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 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 provides care and accommodation for five young people, male and female, aged 11 to 17 years at any one time, who may be experiencing emotional or behavioural difficulties.

The home is a large detached 1960s property, situated in a quiet corner of a residential area adjacent to a community farm. Local bus routes located nearby provide easy access to the amenities of the city centre.

Summary

This unannounced interim inspection took place over one day. This forms part of the annual inspection programme to examine the standard of care and services provided to young people. The focus of the inspection was to review the actions and recommendations identified at the last inspection. The key

standards relating to staying safe were also evaluated. At the time of the inspection, three young people were accommodated.

This home continues to provide a good standard of care to young people which ensures that good outcomes are achieved for them. This is supported by comments made by young people, documentary evidence seen and observations made.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Two actions and two recommendations were identified at the last inspection. Two actions and one recommendation have been complied with. The recommendation relating to the recording of young people going absent without consent remains outstanding.

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.

Staff promote the rights of young people by ensuring that their privacy and dignity is respected. Young people's information is also kept secure and staff understand the need to keep their information confidential as well as being clear about the limits of confidentiality.

Clear policies and procedures are established for dealing with complaints. Young people are supported to raise any issues of concern openly and the process of making a complaint is clearly understood by them. Two complaints have been received since the last inspection, one of which is still ongoing. However, full records have not been maintained in respect to these.

Young people live in a safe environment where their welfare is promoted and they are protected from abuse. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place in respect to child protection which comply with the Local Safeguarding Children Board's procedures. All staff have received

safeguarding training and a clear system is established to ensure that staff receive regular ongoing refresher training in this area of practice.

Young people are protected from bullying and an anti-bullying policy is established which is conveyed to the young people on admission. Staff take action to challenge any incidents of bullying with the main focus being placed on its effects.

A system is established for the responding, reporting and recording of any event where a young person goes absent without consent. Staff respond appropriately to any absence to ensure their safe return at the earliest opportunity. However, records are still not maintained which records the date and time of the young person's return and that all relevant parties have been informed of this.

Routines and clear expectations are established to assist young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour. Staff use encouragement, reinforcement and positive behaviour incentives and challenge any negative behaviour of young people. Sanctions and physical intervention are also used where necessary with staff being trained in the use of physical intervention. However, full and detailed records are not maintained of all sanctions applied. Young people's physical intervention plans and individual behaviour management plans are in the process of being combined into one document.

The health and safety policy and practice guidelines within the home are robust to ensure that staff and young people are appropriately safeguarded. A tour of the premises identified no specific health and safety issues. The various fire safety records are now suitably maintained with staff and young people being fully involved in regular fire evacuation procedures.

Although no new staff have been appointed since the last inspection, the authority has robust staff recruitment practices for the protection of young people. New staff do not commence employment in the home until all the relevant checks have been carried out.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Detailed placement care plans are now established for young people. These identify their needs, including any specialist intervention and how these are met on a day-to-day basis. Young people are encouraged and supported to attend their statutory reviews and contribute to this process.

Young people are encouraged and supported to make decisions and contribute to and influence the way the home is run. This is achieved through young people's statutory reviews, key worker sessions, regular house meetings and on a day-to-day basis.

Young people live in a supportive environment where positive relationships were observed between the staff and young people. A friendly and relaxed atmosphere has been created where young people are supported to express their views about any issues. Staff carry out their duties in a caring manner and young people are relaxed and at ease in their company.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The home's design and location is suitable for its stated function. Young people live in a warm, homely and welcoming environment which is maintained to a good standard being clean, tidy and comfortable. It is also furnished and decorated to a very good standard. Young people are provided with a good level of communal space to meet their individual and collective needs. A programme of redecoration continues to be undertaken to enhance young people's living environment.

Young people are provided with individual bedrooms which are personalised to their individual tastes. Locks are fitted to their bedroom doors as well as to the communal bath, shower and toilet facilities to promote young people's privacy and dignity. Good bathing and toilet facilities are provided together with suitable laundry facilities to meet the needs of the home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Young people are looked after by a staff team who are trained and competent to meet their needs. New staff are provided with an induction programme and staff are also supported and encouraged to increase their knowledge and expertise through attendance at appropriate training. The home has made good progress to ensure that young people are cared for by a fully trained workforce. The staff team have exceeded the 80% benchmark in the National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in the Care of Children and Young People.

The home is committed to providing sufficient staff on duty to meet the individual and collective needs of the young people. There are two care staff on duty throughout the waking day with two members of care staff sleeping in each night. Additional staffing levels are provided when required. The hours worked by the manager are additional to the staffing levels. Staff have a variety of experience in the care of young people and the home ensures that young people receive continuity of care from a stable staff team.

The home continues to be managed by a Registered Manager who is suitably qualified and experienced. The manager is supported by three assistant unit managers which enables them to effectively monitor the day-to-day care provided to young people.

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
22	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline, a full written record is maintained with particular regard to sanctions. (Regulation 17(4))	9 August 2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure that a full written record is maintained of all complaints (NMS 16.3)
- ensure that full written records are maintained in respect of young people who go absent without consent. (NMS 19.6)