

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC034797
Inspection date	25 March 2010
Inspector	Robert Hewston
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	20 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 is operated by a local authority children's services department. The home provides long term residential care for looked after children and young people of either gender between the ages of 12 and 16 years. The home is a six bedroom, two-storey detached property owned by the local authority. It is located in the suburbs of a large town.

Four young people were present during the inspection, one took an active part in the inspection and another had filled in a questionnaire before the inspection.

Summary

This was an unannounced interim inspection. It covered all the key national minimum standards in the outcome area of staying safe; and followed up two recommendations made at the key inspection in January 2010. Relevant standards have been inspected in the outcome area of enjoying and achieving.

The overall quality rating is outstanding with an outstanding feature in staying safe and enjoying and achieving. The previous full inspection showed all outcomes to be outstanding.

The home still provides an excellent overall quality of care. The management and staff team demonstrate a commitment to providing a safe, stable environment for young people.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection two recommendations were set. Both recommendations have been met.

Records show how young people are taking an active role in their care plans. Key working discussions have monthly reports with comments from the young people and include any disagreement on what has been recorded.

The final recommendation was to ensure fire drills show which young people and staff participated in the evacuation. All drills show who has participated by recording all participants initials.

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.

The home continues to provide an environment that is safe and secure and that provides excellent arrangements for the promotion, protection and care of children and young people. The home benefits from a range of operational policies and procedures that are used effectively to promote their safety and welfare. Staff understand and promote an individual's right to privacy and confidentiality. Young people know that no-one will enter their bedroom without their permission, except for safeguarding reasons. These reasons are clearly explained in the

young people's guide. The staff are able to demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the privacy policies in their day-to-day practice. Young people's privacy is respected and they are able to enjoy their own private space.

Staff complete comprehensive risk assessments that are reviewed at least monthly and updated when required. The Registered Manager and staff team have a clear focus on potential and actual risks facing each individual. Any procedures needing to be put into place to ensure children's safety are made in full consultation with placing authorities. Staff are able to adjust and adapt their practices to ensure risks are minimised and young people's welfare is safeguarded.

Each young person's right to complain is supported by the staff team. In addition, young people have access to an independent advocate whose contact details are well advertised. This is an excellent example of the organisation's overall policy to promote young people's rights and entitlements.

The potential for bullying is taken seriously and risk assessed with respect to each child. Bullying is rare, however, staff are mindful of the potential for bullying at all times. Staff focus on the positives. Young people are given many chances to adjust and improve inappropriate behaviours, staff are patient and listen to young people.

Excellent behaviour management systems are in place that encourages young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour through positive reward for acceptable behaviour and constructive response to inappropriate behaviour. Behaviour management plans are in place that form part of children's placement plans. These are reviewed monthly and include targets identified for children to develop placement stability and the strategies necessary to achieve this. Staff receive training in managing challenging behaviour and physical intervention. All records pertaining to physical interventions are detailed and comprehensive. These include de-escalation strategies used, description of each hold used, its effectiveness and outcome, and details of the manager's debriefing with staff following any physical intervention. Very few formal sanctions or physical interventions are used and the home's philosophy is carried out in practice in terms of its behaviour management policy. Staff focus on the positives, young people are given many chances to adjust and improve inappropriate behaviours. Staff are patient and listen to young people. Staff practice is underpinned by a range of excellent training that supports the home to be a safe place for young people to live.

All statutory health and safety checks are carried out within the required timescales. Staff and young people know and understand fire evacuation procedures and respond to them in a timely manner. Risk assessments are available for the building and fire prevention. For example, fire prevention systems are checked and serviced regularly. Well rehearsed emergency evacuation procedures are carried out showing which staff and young persons have taken part in the drill. Risk assessments are completed to inform the home about environmental safety issues.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Young people receive an exceptional standard of individual care. Staff have a thorough awareness of individual young people's needs and discuss them at handovers and team meetings. They show a high motivation to make sure that individual needs are met, and act as advocates for the young people. The home provides a positive culture of engagement and dialogue where

young people's needs are well known and risks are managed effectively. The home's records reflect the diverse and individualised needs of each young person. Staff operate in a non-discriminatory way and understand the importance of promoting social inclusion and the need to challenge any form of discrimination. Young people feel valued and supported.

Staff are good at liaising with other agencies to ensure that a wide range of appropriate support can be delivered. For example the in-depth work on understanding young people's rights when they have no identified country has created specialists within the staff team. The acknowledgement of other professional agencies such as the children's right officer, social services, barristers and court judges demonstrates the excellent work the staff team are achieving to give these young people the same opportunities as other care leavers in the looked after service. They are also creative about how they offer support to the young people, and feel strongly that this is a very important part of their role. Key working sessions work very well and are based around the care planning and reviewing process. This ensures that each need is properly assessed and the required support planned and delivered as the young peoples needs require it.

Young people receive excellent support from staff to help them through their education. Arrangements are well established with supportive routines that help with consistent attendance. Education is viewed positively and staff know what they need to do for each young person to ensure the right help is provided. As a consequence of this, young people receive practical and emotional support to do well.

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 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
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Recommendations

There are no recommendations.