

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	14 January 2010
Inspector	Jacqueline Malcolm
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	25 November 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

The children's home is run by a local authority. It is registered to accommodate up to four young people aged from 11 to 17 years old, of either gender. The accommodation consists of four single bedrooms, and spacious communal areas for eating, studying and relaxing.

The home is in a residential area and is close to public transport. One of the main aims of the setting is to give young people the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Summary

This was an unannounced interim inspection, undertaken to assess how well the home is working to keep young people safe under the outcome area of staying safe and address the recommendations made at the last inspection under the outcome areas of positive contribution, economic well-being and organisation. Due to the limited nature of this inspection, the overall judgement has not changed.

The home provides a good standard of care to young people who are making steady progress. There are effective systems to ensure the safety and welfare of young people is promoted.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Limited progress has been made to address the good practice recommendations. This is in relation to implementing the fire risk assessment on completion of outstanding work and ensuring that young people who need a pathway plan have one. The actual meals that young people eat are not evaluated during the monitoring process to demonstrate that they have a healthy, balanced and nutritional diet. The Statement of Purpose has not been amended to include details about the new Responsible Individual. Implementing these measures ensures that young people benefit from systems that further promotes their care and welfare needs.

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.

The arrangements to safeguard and protect the welfare of young people are effective. This is enhanced by appropriate staff training, practices and organisational systems that underpin safe practice.

Staff respect young people's privacy and dignity and keep information about them confidential. This includes the home keeping files with the room number instead of the young person's name. There have been no room searches for some time.

The complaints procedure is known to young people and they have used it in the past. Young people are protected from bullying. Staff are aware of the potential for young people to bully and intimidate each other. They appropriately address this behaviour and create an environment

where bullying is known to be unacceptable. Young people sign up to the bullying contract and discuss this issue in their house meetings.

Young people missing without authority are well protected and the frequency of young people missing from the home has greatly reduced. Staff follow the agreed protocols to ensure the safety of young people. Safeguarding strategy meetings with other agencies are held with respect to young people who are regularly missing from home. These meetings are effective and the outcomes for young people are good.

Young people's behaviour is well managed. Staff use a number of strategies to promote good behaviour. This includes positive incentives, restorative justice and discussions about behaviour in young people's meetings. Staff talk to individual young people about their behaviour and may pick them up on bad language. This promotes socially acceptable behaviour. Behaviour management plans are monitored and young people are involved in their development. This encourages them to take responsibility for their behaviour. These measures have resulted in no restraints and few sanctions.

The systems for the recruitment of staff and vetting of visitors to ensure that young people are not exposed to unsuitable people is good. Young people are protected by good standards of physical safety and security. This includes regular checks on the fire systems. Young people are helped to stay safe as a result of these measures.

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.

Young people are making progress in education and employment activities to improve their future prospects.

Young people who do not have a pathway plan are well supported to prepare for independence. These plans continue to be developed and are lead by placing social workers with young people's involvement. Staff continue to pursue missing pathway plans.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The Statement of Purpose details the services that the home provides to young people. However, the details of the new Responsible Individual have not been updated to reflect changes to their name, address and relevant qualifications and experience.

The quality of care is regularly monitored by the acting manager and visitor appointed on behalf of the organisation. However, the actual meals that young people eat are not evaluated. It is not clear how the manager and visitor satisfy themselves that the meals provide young people with a nutritious, balanced and varied diet.

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

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

- implement the fire risk assessment on completion of outstanding work (NMS 26.8)
- implement the pathway plan for young people who need them (NMS 6)
- monitor the actual meals that young people eat (NMS 32)
- include the name, address and relevant qualifications and experience of the responsible individual in the Statement of Purpose. (NMS 1.2)