

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Graham Robinson
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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 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 home provides medium to long-term care to young people of primary school age on admission. It specialises in working with children and young people who suffer from an attachment disorder or difficulty. All admissions are planned.

The home is located in a residential area and has a domestic appearance. It provides a child-friendly environment with space for young people to follow their individual interests. It contains all the fixtures, equipment and furnishings expected in a domestic dwelling.

There is an expectation that young people are educated in school, not in the home, and all young people are in full-time education at a community based school. Full advantage is taken of community based leisure activities and pursuits.

As well as residential provision, the home provides individual therapeutic programmes. All such activity takes place away from the home environment. It remains the responsibility of placing authorities who purchase a therapeutic package for a young person to ensure it is appropriate to meet their individual needs.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This short, unannounced interim inspection was used to follow up any actions and recommendations made at the previous inspection. In addition, the key standards linked to staying safe have also been reviewed. No other areas have been inspected on this occasion, so no change to the overall quality rating attained at the previous full inspection has been made.

Since the previous inspection there have been only minor changes to the staff team. The management of the home, along with its ethos, structure and working practices, remain as they were. The home is stable and continues to provide good levels of care to a highly dependent group of young people.

The four young people living at the home are in stable, long term placements. They are all in full time education. They speak positively about the staff and their experiences of the home, with all of them feeling the home is a safe place to live.

No issues, concerns or complaints were raised by either young people or staff. No new actions have been made as a result of this inspection. However, one new recommendation linked to greater consistency of recording in the central physical

intervention records, has been made. In addition, one recommendation from the previous inspection has been carried over.

Improvements since the last inspection

The report from the previous inspection contains one action and two recommendations. The action and one recommendation have been fully addressed. This has led to new external and internal doors being fitted to the main entrance at the front of the home. They are secured in such a way that allows easy access out should there be an emergency. The home is also now more pro-active with placing authorities who are slow to arrange statutory reviews for young people.

Whilst some progress has been noted regarding the second recommendation, which is to ensure that all areas of the home are decorated and furnished to the same standard, some areas have yet to be completed. Therefore, the recommendation has been repeated.

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 safety and rights of young people are protected. The organisation, working practices, links with external agencies and strategies designed to keep young people safe, remain intact. The records detailing complaints, missing from home, accidents and sanctions, known in the home as consequences, are properly kept. However, there are some gaps in the central physical intervention records.

Whilst not having cause to test them since the previous inspection, young people are aware of how they can activate the complaints procedures, if required. They have access to relevant information on this matter, but most are confident the manager will deal with any worries or concerns they may have, quickly and fairly.

The group can be volatile on occasions and staff are organised and deployed to minimise opportunities for young people to aggravate, fall out or bully each other. Young people themselves raised no concerns or issues about bullying, confirming that staff are around at all times and are quick to intervene.

Because of the history, age and nature of the group, incidents linked to behaviour management occur regularly. However, they are well managed and incidents that erupt spontaneously, are quickly dispelled by staff, often without resorting to sanction or punishment.

Young people are settled in their placements, which is underpinned by the fact that no young person has gone missing from the home within the last twelve months. None of the young people shared any worries, concerns or complaints about staff or the way behaviour management issues are handled. Indeed, the relationships between staff and young people were observed as good.

Since the previous inspection, one new permanent staff member has been recruited. Appropriate evidence is retained on site to show that staff recruitment and clearance procedures meet with regulatory requirements.

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.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Recommendations

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

- ensure that all sections of the central physical intervention records are fully completed at all times (NMS 22.9)
- ensure all areas of the home are decorated and furnished to the same standard. (NMS 24.2)