

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Deborah White
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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

This children's home offers short-break care and accommodation for up to six young people of either sex aged 12 years to 17 years.

The home is situated in a village community and is within walking distance of local amenities.

The ground floor is made up of a lounge with a large screen satellite television, a dining room, a young people's room with a computer and educational facilities, a kitchen and a young person's bedroom with an en-suite bathroom. The first floor has bedrooms and bathroom facilities and a staff office. There is an enclosed garden to the rear and ample car parking space.

There was one child attending for short-break care and he declined to speak about how it is to stay at the home.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

The purpose of this unannounced interim inspection was to look all the key national minimum standards in the outcome area of staying safe.

Outcomes for being healthy; enjoying and achieving; positive contribution; economic well-being and organisation will be looked at during the next full inspection.

Safeguarding at this home is excellent. Staff are dynamic, enthusiastic, and actively contribute to keeping children safe and secure. The team practice consistently high standards and continually update their knowledge to meets the needs of children who use this service. Robust monitoring ensures the home's safeguarding procedures are rigorously followed. The Registered Manager is not afraid to challenge practice and the home operates in an open and transparent way.

Children are protected from bullying. Good behaviour is encouraged, and rewarded, to promote self-confidence and self-awareness. Physical interventions are carried out safely and for the right reasons.

Privacy is respected and children have positive relationships with staff. Children are very well informed and have their rights promoted. Equality and diversity outcomes are outstanding. Children are able to experience extremely positive staying safe outcomes.

There are no actions or recommendations arising from this visit.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were no actions or recommendations from the last 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's privacy is respected. Each child has their own bedroom and all bathrooms and toilets are fitted with appropriate locks. Staff fully understand the home's confidentiality statement and know what information can, and cannot, be shared with children, parents and other professionals.

Room searches are only carried out where a child's welfare is deemed at risk. The home's records detail when each search is carried out and why. Children sign each entry to show that they have been informed when their possessions have been searched. Where police have been contacted to search a child's room, if staff suspect a crime has been committed, a copy of the police's right to entry form is attached to the records. This empowers children by informing them of their rights in relation to police regulations.

Children know how to complain and all complaints are taken seriously. There is good information to inform children and parents about how to complain. The home's procedures include details about how to contact Ofsted if children wish to tell us about any worries they have.

The complaint log includes lots of compliments, and thank you letters, from children, parents and placing social workers. A local advocacy worker visits the home on an informal basis to befriend and advise children of their right to express their views.

Staff handle child protection concerns exceedingly well. The home's procedures are known to staff and the reporting systems for making child protection referrals are robust. Additional training has been undertaken to supplement annual child protection updates. Courses include awareness of domestic violence; safeguarding children from exploitation; safeguarding children with a disability and neglect and hidden harm. The Registered Manager has also recently spent a day shadowing the local child protection social work team to give him an insight into how children are protected in an emergency situation.

Children are kept safe from bullying. The home promotes a zero tolerance to any kind of intimidation of children from their peers. The countering bullying risk assessment is regularly reviewed and updated to reduce the risk of bullying. Staff receive regular training, which updates and develops their knowledge about how to keep children safe from bullies.

Children who go missing are protected in line with the home's policies and procedures. Children are seen by an independent person upon their return to the home. Recent guidance from Ofsted, and the Department for Education, has been discussed in staff meetings. Protocols with local police, to look for missing children, ensure all vulnerable children are safeguarded.

Behaviour is managed positively to help children interact in a socially acceptable way. There are clear policies, that are known by staff, that depict what sanctions can be used and why. Records show that rewards are used to promote children's confidence and feelings of achievement.

Restorative justice techniques are employed to help children understand how their behaviour impacts on others. The home has recently been accredited, by Teesside university, for the work they have done in helping children overcome behavioural issues. Two nominated staff members help to train staff in other children's homes; social work teams; schools and other professional agencies. Staff have also presented at conferences to demonstrate how restorative justice approaches to behavioural management are effective.

Where restraints on children have been used, comprehensive documentation fully describes each event so the registered persons can monitor all physical interventions carried out. Children are encouraged to express their views and staff receive a full de-brief to reflect on their role in each incident. Restraints are discussed at staff meetings to further review any pre-disposing factors, leading to a restraint, and how the intervention has impacted on individual children.

Meticulous fire safety measures keep children, staff and visitors safe. All safety checks are carried out regularly and fire drills ensure children, and staff, know the procedure to follow if the fire alarm activates. The evacuation procedure is explained to all visitors upon their entry to the premises.

Monitoring of visitors prevents children being exposed to potential abusers. All unknown visitors have their identification checked and verified. The visitor book is signed so the Registered Manager knows who has come into the home and why.

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.