

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035181
Inspection date	28 May 2009
Inspector	Deborah White
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	20 February 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

This children's home offers short-break care and accommodation for five children of either sex, aged from 12 years old up to 17 years old.

The home is situated in a village community and is within walking distance of local facilities. The ground floor is made up of a lounge with a large screen satellite television, a dining room, a children's room with a computer, a kitchen and a child's bedroom with an ensuite bathroom.

The first floor has bedrooms and bathroom facilities.

There is an enclosed garden to the rear.

There was one child present during this visit but they declined the invitation to talk about what it is like to stay at the home.

Summary

The purpose of this unannounced random inspection was to look at the action from the last report and the key national minimum standards (NMS) in staying safe.

Outcomes for being healthy, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution, economic wellbeing and organisation were not looked at. These outcomes will be looked at during the next key inspection.

The home are good at keeping children safe. There is good guidance to inform children of their rights, and what to do if they feel threatened or afraid, and staff are working towards gaining an accredited award to help counter bullying.

How children feel about restraints is not adequately recorded, to ensure the registered person listens to children's views on physical interventions, and placement plans do not fully include all children's assessed needs and day-to-day interventions.

There are two recommendations arising from this visit.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the registered person was required to improve how placement plans are written. There have been some improvements, for example the format has changed and there is closer monitoring, but not all assessed needs and how these will be met on a day-to-day basis are included; therefore, a recommendation will be raised in this report.

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.

Children's privacy is protected and their rights promoted by good room search policies. Children are made aware, on or prior to admission, that staff may need to carry out room searches. Where a search has been undertaken the home's recording shows children were present and fully informed of the reasons why staff needed to look in their bedroom and the room search log is signed by the manager to show that searches are monitored.

Children know how to complain and are encouraged to express their views. Thank-you cards from children and parents and positive emails from placing social workers, which are recorded in the home's complaints and compliments log, show good outcomes for children.

Children are protected by robust procedures and regular staff training in child protection. Where there are possible concerns good record keeping clearly shows what safeguarding actions have been taken. Staff know what to do if they suspect abuse and any welfare issues are recorded in children's case files.

There has been some good work done to counter bullying in the home. There is a lot of information and guidance for children and staff and the Registered Manager regularly monitors and reviews any incidents or concerns. Children who go missing are protected by staff working with local police to look for and support missing vulnerable children.

Detailed records are kept of physical interventions, to ensure all restraints are monitored, but there is nowhere in the home's records for children to add their comments. Relationships between staff and children are very positive and behaviour management approaches are based on rewards rather than sanctions. Children are helped to develop good behaviour, using restorative justice techniques, so they learn to understand the consequences of good, and negative, actions or behaviours.

Children, staff and visitors are protected by good health and safety procedures. A regular environmental risk assessment helps keep the home safe and secure, and regular checks on other hazards, such as using cleaning chemicals, make sure all reasonable steps are taken to promote good health and safety.

Visitors are vetted to safeguard children from potential abusers. Security measures are in place to monitor the outside of the home and all unknown visitors have their identification checked.

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?

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):

- ensure that where restraint is used children are encouraged to write, or have their views recorded and sign their name against them if possible, in the records kept by the home (NMS 22.14)
- ensure the placement plan for each child sets out the clearly assessed needs, the objectives of the placement, how these will be met on a day-to-day basis and the contribution of the registered person and staff of the home (NMS 2.1).