

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC035235
Inspection date	21/01/2011
Inspector	Dennis Bradley
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	10/09/2010
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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 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 children's home is located in a village and provides accommodation for up to three young people aged 12 to 17 years old who are preparing for independent living. The ground floor has a lounge with satellite television, a dining room and computer with internet access, a laundry, office and staff sleep-in facilities, and a kitchen. The garden has an area for people to sit. The young people and another member of staff sleep upstairs.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an unannounced, interim inspection. It assessed the key national minimum standards relating to the outcome staying safe. The inspection also assessed whether the registered persons have addressed the recommendations made at the previous inspection. These related to: action taken when young people go missing and young people's placement plans.

As this was an interim inspection not all of the key national minimum standards were assessed. Consequently there was not enough evidence to assess or amend the overall quality rating, or the outcome judgements for being healthy, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution, economic well-being and organisation. The overall quality rating continues to be good.

The three young people currently living at the home were present for part of the inspection.

Staff are good at encouraging and supporting young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour. They respond constructively to inappropriate behaviour and are good at creating an atmosphere where bullying is known to be unacceptable. The home provides a safe, secure setting for the young people and staff actively promote and safeguard their welfare.

However, one area for improvement is that the registered person has not informed Ofsted of a significant event relating to the care and protection of young people at the home.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection the registered person was asked to ensure that: when a young person returns after being missing their social worker or an independent person sees them or, if this is not possible, staff record the reasons; young people's

placement plans set out clearly their assessed needs and how they are to be met. The registered person has taken action to address these recommendations and this should help promote the welfare of the young people.

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.

Staff make sure that young people's privacy is promoted. The young people all have their own bedrooms to which they have appropriate access. One young person's bedroom has an en-suite shower and toilet. Doors to the bathrooms and toilets have appropriate locks. Staff ensure information about young people is handled confidentially and stored securely. There is clear guidance for staff regarding when it may be necessary to search young people's possessions and staff make sure they follow the guidance.

There are suitable procedures for managing complaints and ensuring young people are listened to. Staff make sure the young people are aware of who they can go to if they have any complaints. Staff take the views and concerns of young people seriously. The home has received two complaints since the last inspection. The Registered Manager ensured these were addressed promptly and appropriately. Staff have also received a written compliment regarding the support they provide to young people.

The home has clear procedures for safeguarding young people from abuse and there are suitable arrangements for making sure that staff receive child protection training. This helps staff protect young people from abuse and ensure they respond appropriately to any allegation or suspicion of abuse.

The home has achieved anti-bullying accreditation. Young people benefit from being looked after by a team of staff who are good at creating an atmosphere where bullying is known to be unacceptable. The home has a clear anti-bullying policy and suitable risk assessments are in place. Staff try to help the young people to develop an understanding and tolerance of the diverse needs of each other.

The home has clear procedures and guidance for staff regarding what to do when young people go missing or are absent from the home without permission. Although this does not happen very often staff, when it does, follow these procedures and take appropriate action to try to keep the young people safe. For example, they notify the relevant people and agencies and, where possible, they carry out a search in the local area.

The home has procedures for notifying the appropriate authorities about significant events relating to the care and protection of young people living at the home. However, Ofsted was not informed of one significant event in line with these procedures.

Staff are good at encouraging and supporting the young people to develop and maintain socially acceptable behaviour. All of the staff have had training in positive behaviour management, including how to deal with unacceptable behaviour by focusing on any harmful consequences and how to repair them. Staff have not used physical restraint on young people very often and when they do this has been reasonable and appropriate. When staff use sanctions these are relevant and reasonable. Staff are also good at making sure they respond positively to acceptable behaviour. A young person said that the rules of the home are fair.

There are good systems in place to keep the young people and adults safe from the risk of fire and other potential hazards. For example, there are good arrangements for carrying out regular checks of equipment such as fire alarms and staff carry out a range of risk assessments, including individual risk assessments for each young person. These help identify what to do to reduce or avoid risks where practicable and appropriate.

The Council has suitable systems in place to help make sure the home only employs suitable people. This includes carrying out a range of checks on new staff before they start working at the home. There are good arrangements for monitoring and managing visitors to the home. These help ensure they do not have inappropriate access to young people.

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, within 24 hours, the appropriate authorities are notified of significant events in accordance with Regulation 30. (NMS 20.1)