

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035387
Inspection date	27 November 2009
Inspector	Bill Drumm
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	22 April 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

Care and accommodation is provided at the home for up to six young people aged 11 years old to 17 years old. The home is detached with an enclosed rear garden. The house has two floors. On the ground floor there is a lounge, kitchen, laundry room, games room, quiet room and staff office. On the first floor there are six bedrooms used by young people, two family sized bathrooms, two toilets, a staff sleep-in room, an education room and the manager's office.

The home is situated in a residential area and is near to local shops. The home is close to local bus routes, which provides easy access to the town centre, with its larger shops and leisure facilities.

Summary

This was an unannounced interim inspection of the home. The outcome areas for young people in the area of staying safe were inspected and found to be good. Recommendations made at the previous inspection were also looked at. Some recommendations have been met and some have only partially been met. Four recommendations have been made following this inspection and the overall quality rating of the home remains good.

Four young people currently live at the home, although none were available to directly contribute to the inspection process.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection members of staff have all received training in the awareness of and effective strategies to counter, bullying. The manager has also reviewed and up dated the home's Statement of Purpose.

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 privacy of young people living at the home is respected and they were observed to be treated with dignity and respect by members of staff. Each young person has their own bedroom. Young people are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms in a style of their own choice and to keep the rooms clean and tidy. The home has policies and procedures in place which explain what action members of staff should take when it is necessary to search a young person's bedroom. There have been a small number of room searches carried out since the last inspection. The room search records show that members of staff had good reasons to enter the young persons bedroom in order to carry out the search. Policies and procedures relating to room searches comply with national minimum standards. Personal information relating to each young person is stored securely to prevent unauthorised access.

Young people are able to make their needs known and to make a formal complaint if they are unhappy about anything. There are policies and procedures in place for dealing with complaints in an effective and timely manner. There has been one complaint made since the last inspection. The complaint was made by a neighbour of the home. Records show that this complaint was dealt with quickly and efficiently. Young people are able to make a formal complaint without having to approach members of staff. Young people were observed at the time of the inspection to speak freely with all members of staff and to make their needs known. All members of staff have received training in the complaints process.

Young people living at the home are protected from exploitation and abuse. A copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures are available in the home. There have been two child protection referrals made since the last inspection. Records show that both incidents were referred quickly to the Local Safeguarding Board and the police. All members of staff working at the home, have undertaken training in child protection.

Young people are protected from being targeted by bullies. The home has policies and procedures in place with regard to countering bullying. Individual risk assessments of a number of areas where bullying might occur have been carried out and the manager regularly reviews these to ensure they are relevant and up to date. However, a risk assessment of the times, places and circumstances in which the risk of bullying is greatest within the home has not been carried out. Members of staff working at the home have received training in countering bullying.

Young people are responded to positively when they return from being absent without authority. The home has policies and procedures in place with regard to what action members of staff should take if a young person is absent without authority. Procedures comply with national minimum standards. There have been a number of occasions since the last inspection when a young person has been absent without authority.

Young people living at the home are encouraged to develop socially acceptable behaviour. The home has policies and procedures in place relating to the safe holding or restraint of young people, although one member of staff has not received appropriate training. There have been a small number of restraints or holds used since the last inspection. Records are retained within a separate bound and numbered book used specifically for that purpose. Records of all restraints or holds used appear to have been reasonable, given the circumstances described. The home also has policies and procedures in place relating to the sanctions that can be used to help young people improve their behaviour. Records of all sanctions used are fully recorded and also appear reasonable.

Young people who live at the home are protected from fire and other hazards within the home. There are good systems in place to ensure that young people, members of staff and visitors to the home are kept safe and free from hazards. Fire drills are carried out at regular intervals although it is unclear whether any are undertaken at night. All members of staff have undertaken training in fire prevention.

Young people are kept safe and are protected from being exposed to potential abusers. The home has a committed staff team and there are good recruitment and selection processes in place. Safety checks are carried out to ensure the suitability of each applicant. Each member of staff has provided references from previous employers or those that know them. Visitors to the home are asked to clearly identify themselves on their arrival and to sign the visitors book.

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.

Members of staff encourage young people to take responsibility for their actions. Young people are encouraged to participate in all activities within the home and to develop independence skills. No young people living at the home have formal pathway plans, as they are not old enough.

Organisation

The organisation is not judged.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Members of staff support and enable young people to participate in community based activities on an equal basis and to develop their own identity. The Statement of Purpose has recently been reviewed and accurately describes what young people can expect from living at the home.

Young people are looked after by members of staff who are supported and properly managed. Members of staff receive regular, formal supervision. However, the content of all supervision does not cover all those areas recommended within national minimum standards. The manager also makes himself available to talk with members of staff should they need to do so. Staff meetings are held at regular intervals and written records of the content of these meetings is retained.

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):

- write a countering bullying risk assessment of the times, places and circumstances in which the risk of bullying is greatest (NMS 18.5)
- ensure all members of staff have up-to date training in the safe holding and restraint of young people (NMS 22)
- record the time at which fire drills are held within the home and ensure that at least one fire drill is held at night (NMS 26.8)

- ensure that all members of staff receive formal supervision on a monthly basis, which covers those areas listed in the National Minimum Standards. (NMS 28.4)