

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	11 February 2010
Inspector	Nicola McEvinney
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	2 November 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 is operated by a local authority for up to six young people aged 11 to 17 years of either gender. The remit of the home has changed to admitting young people in an emergency situation for a time limited period of 12 weeks.

The home is a large detached property situated on the outskirts of a small town with good access to local amenities and public transport. The young people have single bedroom accommodation and a bathroom is located near the bedrooms. There is a room known as the contact room on the first floor where meetings can take place in private.

The communal areas comprise of an open-plan dining and living room on the ground floor. There is a yard and a large garden. The home has two cars to transport young people if required.

Summary

The purpose of this unannounced interim inspection was to check on the progress made with the recommendations made at the last inspection and to ensure young people are safe.

The home is going through a transition with the remit changing and having to deal with staff absences. There is some extensive refurbishment on-going which also adds to the unsettled period. All the young people are recent admissions and staff are struggling to ensure the correct paperwork is available. This results in a lack of care planning to verify how young people are to be cared for. However, relationships between staff and young people is supportive and nurturing.

There are a number of shortfalls identified at this visit; some are outstanding from the last inspection, mainly around the lack of written plans. Health needs are not identified and there are no care plans; not all young people have a behaviour management plan. Reviews are still not always held within 72 hours of admission. The consent to the administration of first aid and non-prescription medication has not been obtained from the person with parental responsibility in all cases.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The home has not met all the recommendations made at the last inspection. However, the home is embarking on a refurbishment programme, enhancing the environment, and all broken furniture has been replaced or repaired.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All the young people have been admitted over recent weeks and health needs assessments have not been done due to the absence of the looked after children nurse. Health care plans have not been developed to show how health needs are being addressed. However, young people are referred to appropriate health care agencies and files contain details of these appointments.

Medication records are in good order and staff have a good awareness of the implications of missed medication and strategies are in place to ensure young people take prescribed medication. The consent to the administration of medical consent is not obtained from the person with parental responsibility in all cases.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people's files are kept securely to maintain confidentiality. Young people have access to a phone and if appropriate calls may be taken in private.

Young people have access to the complaints system; leaflets explaining the procedure are readily available. No complaints have been received, although the home has received a compliment from a young person thanking staff of the care they have been given.

All staff have attended safeguarding training and new staff have access to on-line training and are able to access the local authority safeguarding board training. Staff have a good awareness of their responsibility in ensuring young people are not at risk in the community and take appropriate steps to ensure their wellbeing.

Staff are vigilant in ensuring young people are safe within the home and take appropriate steps to ensure that vulnerable young people are supervised.

A number of young people fail to return to the home when expected and staff follow agreed procedures. However, young people stay in the locality and there is good liaison with the local police. The home accesses an independent organisation to debrief young people when they return to the home to ensure that they have no underlying fears that make them want to stay away from the home. Measures are to be put in place to prevent young people leaving the home during the night without alerting staff.

There have been no restraints recorded since the last inspection. A number of sanctions are recorded these are appropriate. Individual crisis management plans have been developed for some young people that identify triggers to behaviours with strategies in place to manage these behaviours; this ensures a consistent approach in dealing with behaviour. However, they are not in place for all the young people.

There are good individual risk assessments in place identifying risks with strategies in place to minimise these risks. Fire records are in good order and the home is linked to the local fire station to ensure a prompt response.

The identity of visitors to the home is checked to ensure only permitted people have access to the home.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All the young people have been admitted recently to the home and there are no care plans in place to show how staff meet the needs of the young people. However, staff have regular key worker sessions with individuals, which are recorded and that cover a range of pertinent issues.

Although reviews are held following admission the majority of them are not within the 72 hour timescale.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The home is undergoing a refurbishment programme to enhance the building creating a more homely environment for the young people. All broken furniture has been replaced or repaired.

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
2	ensure a placement plan (care plan) is in place setting out on a day-to-day basis how young people are to be cared for, their welfare safeguarded and promoted, the arrangements for their health care and education and arrangements for contact with significant people. (Regulation 12 (a, b & C))	1 April 2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure health care plans are developed setting out how the home is to meet the health needs of each young person (NMS 12.1)
- obtain written permission from the person with parental responsibility for each young person, for the administration of first aid and appropriate non-prescription medication (NMS 13.4)
- ensure behaviour management plans are in place for each young person (NMS 22.2)
- ensure a review is initiated within 72 hours of admission to the home. (NMS 5.6)