

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035518
Inspection date	1 September 2009
Inspector	Monica Hargreaves
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	16 March 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 home is owned and managed by a charitable organisation. It is registered to provide both short breaks and longer term care to children and young people with complex disabilities and sensory impairment, who are aged from seven years to 17 years. The home forms part of a school campus. The school is separately inspected by Ofsted.

Young people are accommodated in three houses. Each house has a bathroom, kitchen, dining area and lounge. Young people have individual bedrooms. The school and home are set in several acres of land which provides opportunities for play and other activities. Onsite facilities include an adapted swimming pool, hydrotherapy pool, sensory rooms and sports facilities. A multi-disciplinary team of health professionals work at the school and home. The team include: speech and language specialists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, audiologists, paediatric and psychiatric services.

The amount of time that the young people are accommodated at the home varies, with some of the young people accommodated for 52 weeks a year, others for one night per week and others at weekends or during term time only.

There were five young people present in different houses at the time of this inspection.

Summary

This unannounced interim inspection was arranged to consider how well the home is meeting the needs of children and young people in the outcome area of Staying Safe. Recommendations made at the last inspection were also considered. Due to the limited nature of this inspection, the overall judgement for the service remains unchanged.

Young people are cared for safely in an environment that is itself kept safe. They benefit from being looked after by staff who are trained and qualified and who understand their specific and complex needs. Staffing levels are good, so that young people are properly supported. Risk assessments are thorough and kept up to date, so that risks are minimised and the welfare of young people is promoted.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Both recommendations made at the last inspection are met. Sanctions that are given to young people are consistent with the agreed care and support plans and are monitored by the manager to assess their effectiveness. There are sufficient staff within the care team who have gained a relevant qualification, to meet the standards and to ensure that young people are looked after by qualified staff.

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.

Young people are protected from abuse because staff are trained and have a very good understanding of the specific and complex needs of the young people in their care and of their responsibilities in relation to reporting concerns. There are robust safeguarding procedures to guide their practice.

The privacy of young people is properly respected. Staff understand the importance of keeping information confidential. They ensure that young people can be private in their rooms and they deliver personal care to young people in a way that protects their dignity.

Complaints are well managed. Managers respond to complaints in line with the organisation's procedure, so that complainants understand their issues are taken seriously and are properly dealt with. Staff understand how the young people in their care make their views and dissatisfactions known and are proactive in identifying and responding to their concerns. All of the young people looked after in the home have contact with parents and families who can advocate on their behalf, and in addition some young people have independent advocates to support them.

Robust individual risk assessments and care and support plans, enable staff to identify the strategies they need to put in place to support young people properly and to protect them from bullying or the risk of going missing from the home. Good staffing levels mean that young people are well cared for and supervised and there is evidence that good care practices ensure that bullying is not an issue in the home and that young people are not able to leave the home without the knowledge of the staff.

Staff support young people well and help them to learn to behave in a way that is socially acceptable, recognising and rewarding positive behaviour and working to minimise situations where challenging behaviour might arise. Staff are trained to respond in a positive way to behaviour that can be challenging. This includes training in the use of appropriate physical intervention. Care and support plans identify issues of concern that might arise for individual young people and detail how staff will work with them to defuse situations. This reduces the likelihood that potentially difficult situations may develop which may mean that young people may need to be physically restrained. Records show that there is very little physical intervention in the houses overall and that such intervention is minimal and used only as a last resort. There is also minimal use of sanctions. Those that are in place are planned and clearly agreed with parents. The Registered Manager scrutinises all records to assess their effectiveness and to ensure that young people are cared for safely and their welfare is promoted.

There are robust systems in place to make sure that young people are looked after safely, in an environment that is kept safe. Individual and generic risk assessments are detailed and reviewed regularly, to make sure that information is up to date. Equipment is checked and serviced and repairs are attended to promptly. Staff are trained in evacuation procedures and have a good understanding of how individual young people should be helped from the building in an emergency, in line with their personal evacuation plan.

Staff recruitment practices are sound, which means that all new staff are thoroughly vetted before they start work. The identity of all visitors to the home is checked and the houses are kept appropriately secure. These systems ensure that unauthorised individuals cannot gain access to young people in 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 not judged.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

As this was an interim inspection, only one standard relating to a previous recommendation has been considered in this outcome area and the overall judgement remains as at the last inspection.

The organisation has a clear structure in place to make sure that all staff gain a relevant qualification once they have completed their probationary period. Since the last inspection, more staff have done so and there is evidence at this inspection, that there are sufficient qualified staff to meet the standards.

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

There are no recommendations.