

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035657
Inspection date	2 February 2010
Inspector	Sue Winson
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	30 July 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

The children's home is owned and managed by a private company. The property is a three storey house, situated close to transport networks, schools and other community facilities.

The home provides care on a medium to long term basis. Clothing, support for education, activities and a holiday are also provided. All young people have single room accommodation.

Summary

At this unannounced interim inspection all key standards under staying safe were considered. In addition standards relating to improvements under organisation were addressed. Four young people were present and gave their views to the inspector.

This home continues to provide an outstanding service. The managers and staff are focussed on improving outcomes in partnership with the young people, their families and other professionals and services. The young people continue to make progress and are well supported to do so. They commented positively about all aspects of life in the home and said it was 'like living in a family' where staff and the young people care about each other. They have a voice, are encouraged to be involved in decision making and said they are listened to. Systems for auditing and monitoring are robust.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The manager has acted on the one recommendation made at the last inspection and has compiled a development plan which has been reviewed. The manager and staff continue to build on good practice for the benefit 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 outstanding.

Young people's privacy is respected and information is confidentially handled. Young people are encouraged to read, sign and comment on many of the records relating to them. Suitable arrangements are in place to ensure they cannot see records which relate to other young people. They say that they can make telephone calls or see visitors in private and that mutual respect is promoted. Records demonstrate that room searches are carried out only when necessary and that young people are informed.

The home's policies, procedures and practices in respect of complaints, safeguarding, bullying and absence without authority serve to promote young people's welfare and protect them. The manager keeps central records for monitoring purposes. Staff sign that they have read all the policies and are positive about the quality of training they have received. Young people know how to complain, and are aware of a range of people they can contact outside of the home. Staff remind them of their rights and the complaints form is also available in languages other

than English. There have been no complaints since the last inspection and the young people said that they have nothing to complain about.

Copies of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and the whistle blowing policy are available to staff. Staff are clear about safe caring strategies and that the safety of young people is paramount in the event of an allegation or suspicion of abuse. There have been no safeguarding issues since the last inspection. The manager and staff ensure that any significant issues or concerns are reported to the relevant people and record that they have done so. There have been no incidents of bullying in the home; the young people are aware of their rights and expressed confidence that staff would deal with any issues. Young people are safeguarded as far as is possible by the home's practices in respect of absences without authority. Risk assessments are in place and full records demonstrate that all appropriate actions and notifications have been completed. Complaints, keeping safe and bullying are regularly discussed with the young people in individual and group sessions. In addition, external agencies are invited into the home to carry out work on specific issues.

Positive behaviour management is evident which is based on building effective relationships between the young people and the staff. The staff group communicate well to ensure consistency of care. Young people are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for their own actions and to understand the effect of their behaviour on other people. Sanctions are rarely used and there have been no incidents of physical intervention. Issues are discussed with the young people who are invited to sign and comment on the records. A reward system is in place which identifies a small number of personal goals and which allows the young people to earn extra money each week. The young people said that they know what is expected of them; staff are fair and 'always there for you'. Young people also commented on areas in which their behaviour has improved since living in the home. The manager and staff discuss behaviour strategies and monitor their effectiveness. An example was given where sanctions were not working, so a competition and quiz was held to raise the young people's awareness. Staff are trained in positive behaviour management.

The home provides physical safety and security. All the necessary checks are carried out within the required timescales and regular fire drills take place. A wide range of generic and individual risk assessments are carried out which include clear strategies to reduce or minimise the risks. They are regularly reviewed and are updated as necessary.

No new staff have been employed in the home since the last inspection. Careful selection and vetting of staff takes place in line with company guidelines. An established induction programme allows for staff to familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures.

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 outstanding.

Young people are looked after by a stable and competent staff group who are trained and qualified to meet their needs. The staff team are well managed and supported and are focussed on achieving positive outcomes for the young people. All necessary cover is provided by a small number of the company's bank staff who know the young people well. The young people are positive in all their comments about the staff. The home is efficiently run and effectively monitored by the manager. Arrangements are in place for deputising in his absence. The managers and staff are committed to an improvement agenda and reflect on their practice continuously. A development plan is in place which is reviewed annually.

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.