

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Sonya Robinson
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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 home provides short-term breaks for children and young people from the ages of seven years to 17 years, with physical, learning and sensory disabilities.

Accommodation is provided over two floors. The ground floor includes a kitchen, two lounges, a light and sensory room, games room and dining room. Children and young people have their own rooms, which are located on the upper floor. The upper level of the home is accessible via a lift for those children and young people who use wheel chairs.

The home is situated near a town and is close to local leisure facilities, local amenities and transport links.

On the day of this visit, children and young people were attending school. Staff and management of the home were spoken with.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

During this interim unannounced inspection the home's response to the actions and recommendations made at the inspection in June 2010 were discussed. In addition, staying safe was also examined and continues to be judged as satisfactory.

The children and young people who live at this home achieve positive outcomes from their placement. Staff provide a safe environment. Safeguarding procedures and training in this area, ensure staff are fully aware of their responsibilities to keep children and young people safe. Staff have a good knowledge of children and young people's behaviour and this enables them to respond quickly and appropriately to any behavioural issues that arise. The support for children and young people is based on promoting positive behaviour in a nurturing environment.

The home has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. As a result of this inspection five good practice recommendations are made. These relate to the documentation of behaviour management, risk assessments, obtaining children and young people's views, continued refurbishment of home and staff training around specific disabilities.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection three actions and five good practice recommendations were made.

The actions were in relation to the complaints procedure including the name, address and telephone number of Ofsted, also the Statement of Purpose and children's guide including this information. These have been completed. The provider was asked to ensure that the service was maintained to enable the children and young people to live as normal a life as possible. A new sturdier garden gate has been fitted to allow the children and young people greater freedom in the garden.

The good practice recommendations were to ensure that there was a clear written policy, procedures and guidance for staff with regards to behaviour management which staff are aware of. This area has improved however, there are still issues around the documentation, therefore this recommendation is raised again through this inspection.

The service was asked to ensure all unnecessary risks to the health or safety of children and young people were identified and where possible eliminated, for example, documenting when the use of a hoist was required, the possible risk involved, and what action the home took to eliminate this. A specific risk assessment regarding the use of a hoist has been implemented.

The service was also asked to ensure that the opinions of all children and young people on matters affecting them, including the day-to-day matters, were ascertained on a regular and frequent basis, for example through key worker sessions and children and young people's meetings. This has commenced and has been addressed in part. Children and young people have been consulted about Christmas, but their views on day-to-day matters isn't being consistently recorded. Therefore this recommendation is raised again through this inspection.

Another recommendation was to ensure that the home was decorated and furnished to a standard which creates a pleasant domestic environment appropriate to the needs of the children and young people accommodated. Since the last inspection the kitchen and laundry have been refurbished and several windows have been replaced. There has also been some work undertaken within the garden. During this inspection, work was still being undertaken. Therefore this recommendation is raised again through this inspection.

Finally management were asked to ensure that all staff receive appropriate training in order to perform their work. Since the last inspection staff have had an opportunity to discuss in team meetings specific issues relating to their work and issues relating to children and young people's disabilities. The inspector was informed that formal training is planned for the new year. This recommendation has been met in part and is therefore raised again through this inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The safety of children and young people is promoted through a range of practices and recordings made by the home. This is centralised around the initial assessment and then drawn into the placement plan. This includes assessing known risks and formulating strategies that provide support to help keep children and young people safe. This extends to countering bullying, protecting children and young people from abuse and having safeguards in place if a child or young person was to go missing. However, children and young people's individual risk assessments are not all of a consistent quality. This means at times that children and young people and staff may be exposed to avoidable risk, through, for example, limited detail being noted.

Children and young people are assisted to develop socially acceptable behaviour through encouragement and in the approach developed by staff. The rapport between children, young people and staff is strong and formed on a professional friendship. The staff are skilled in using diversion and distraction techniques to help children and young people stay safe and minimise self harming. When physical restraint is found necessary, it is only used to prevent the likelihood of injury. The staff carrying out the restraint are well trained in the form of physical intervention that best reflects the physical and emotional needs of children and young people the home is supporting at any given time. This collective approach helps children and young people to receive the support they need and to keep them and others safe. Any incident that involves physical restraint is recorded. This record provides details to validate the action taken by staff. However, there is limited detail made in the log to enable the management to make a full assessment on the appropriateness of the measure used. Also, the record is not detailing fully, action necessary as a result of this assessment. Similar issues are also apparent within the sanctions log.

There is an effective system operated for securing the health and safety of children and young people inclusive of fire, water and environmental safety. Also, children and young people have their privacy respected and all aspects of personal care managed sensitively and in a dignified manner. Furthermore, they are able to raise concerns with the knowledge their complaints are listened to and addressed. There is overall a rigorous procedure in operation for the recruitment of staff that ensures their suitability to work with children and young people is validated.

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 the opinions of all children and young people on matters affecting them, including the day-to-day matters, are ascertained on a regular and frequent basis, for example through key worker sessions and children and young people's meetings (NMS 8.4)
- ensure that there is a clear written policy, procedures and guidance for staff with regards to behaviour management which staff are aware of (NMS 22.2, 22.3)
- ensure that risk assessments (identifying hazards, estimating level of risk to health, safety or welfare from the hazards identified, and identifying action to be taken both to reduce risks to an acceptable level where practicable and to avoid unnecessary or unreasonable risks) are carried out, recorded in writing and regularly reviewed (NMS 26.2)
- ensure that the home is decorated and furnished to a standard which creates a pleasant domestic environment appropriate to the needs of the children and young people accommodated (NMS 24.2)
- ensure that all staff receive appropriate training in order to perform their work. (NMS 31.4)