

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC036186
Inspection date	10 February 2010
Inspector	David Morgan
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	9 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 home is a children's respite service registered to a local authority and located near the centre of town. It provides respite and overnight care for up to eight children and young people with learning and/or physical disabilities who are aged between five and 16 years of age, and also day care.

There are eight single bedrooms with a lounge, play area, soft play area and dining room. There is a secure outdoor play area at the back of the property, a new playground at the side with a range of equipment, and car parking is at the front. The home is close to local shops and leisure facilities, and there is good access to public transport. There is a company minibus available.

A number of children contributed to the inspection by spending time with the inspector undertaking activities.

Summary

This unannounced interim inspection finds the overall standard of care to be at a good level with the focus of the inspection being on issues raised in the last inspection and on Staying Safe rather than any other outcome areas. The children and young people all have complex needs and the respite function itself is managerially complicated. Therefore, it is to the credit of the team that consistently high standards are being maintained. Effective managerial action is undertaken on any issues that arise within the home, including issues from previous reports. The action and recommendations made last time are now resolved. No actions are made this time and only one recommendation, which is of a legal rather than a practice nature.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection made one action and three recommendations. An appropriate register is now in place and the Statement of Purpose now contains the required information. However, the Statement of Purpose and function of the service do not reflect the service provided to every child and young person.

Individual children and young people's placement plan targets are now revisited before every shift and progress is simply and effectively recorded. This means that children and young people's progress is more readily observed and the efforts of staff are more focussed than previously. The cultural, religious, language and racial needs of children and young people are shown in their records. Positive work is also underway to ensure that suitable steps are taken to enable children and young people to learn about issues of diversity, for example, through art, thematic events and meals.

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's privacy and dignity is respected particularly well, for example, by providing them with the same bedrooms for each visit, unless they request a change, and dealing sensitively with personal care issues. Any complaint or identified concern is addressed without delay and the complainant is kept informed of progress. Staff are sensitive to the changing needs and preferences of children and young people and adapt the service accordingly. In other respects too the welfare of young people is fully promoted. Any safeguarding issues or suspicions are carefully considered and recorded and there are close links with social workers. For example, staff are alert to the possibility of children and young people targeting each other and ensure that the combination of children and young people and staff is always the best possible. The organisation accepts that this may reduce the availability of respite beds to families.

There is very effective prevention of children and young people being absent without authority partly because they receive one-to-one supervision. This means that any problems are addressed promptly and within the plans compiled for each individual. Physical interventions are monitored closely and do not escalate into restraints. Challenging behaviour is addressed with a high degree of respect to the individual.

The service provides children and young people with a high level of physical safety and security. For example, fire drills are undertaken using different scenarios, which means that staff learn to think clearly during emergencies and use the most appropriate escape routes. Fire safety arrangements are reviewed prior to each shift to ensure they will adequately address the needs of the new group; this is good practice. The safety of children and young people is also assured by thorough staff recruitment processes.

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?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's 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):

- ensure the Statement of Purpose accurately describes what the home sets out to do for all children, with regard to children and young people who have extended stays. (NMS 1.1)