

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC036262
Inspection date	02/03/2011
Inspector	Pamela Nuckley / Mark Ryder
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	20/07/2010
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2011

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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

This children's home can accommodate up to four young people aged between 11 to 17 years. The home provides medium to long-term care for young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties.

The home is a detached property amongst similar residential properties. The young people have single bedrooms with bathrooms located on the ground and first floor. The lounge, dining area, kitchen, education room and staff office are on the ground floor. There is a garden to the rear of the property including a fully equipped gymnasium. Car parking is at the front of the property. There is easy access to local shops and leisure facilities and there is access to public transport.

Four young people are presently in placement. Two young people contributed to the inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is inadequate - enforcement action.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection of the service to assess compliance with the national minimum standards for Children's Homes and the Children's Homes Regulations.

This inspection looked at the progress the setting has made with the regulatory requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection. The inspection also focused on the safety and welfare of young people. No other outcome areas were assessed. The staying safe outcome received a judgement of inadequate. Four actions and four recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection.

Relationships between staff and young people were positive and nurturing. Staff understood the needs of young people well. There are appropriate and realistic boundaries in place which young people respond positively too. Staff and management follow all policies and procedures in relation to child protection issues and do this promptly. However, a number of shortfalls were identified in the last inspection which have not been addressed and further shortfalls were identified on this inspection around health and safety, physical interventions and sanctions, visitor's to the home, privacy and bullying.

Two young people spoke to the inspectors and said that they felt safe, that they had good relationships with staff. One young person gave the home an eight out of 10 for being happy there. Young people were observed to be comfortable and relaxed in their interactions with staff. Staff and management showed a clear understanding of

the well-being and needs of the young people and management follow all policies and procedures in relation to child protection issues and do this promptly.

Improvements since the last inspection

Four actions and three recommendations were made as a result of the previous inspection. Three actions have been met and one remains outstanding. One recommendation has been met and two remain outstanding.

The home was asked to ensure that the complaints procedures included the name, address and telephone number of the regulatory body. Also to notify without delay the relevant persons or agencies of the matters set out in Schedule 5 in particular serious accidents sustained by a child and involvement or suspected involvement of a child accommodated at the home in prostitution. The registered person was also asked to ensure that all persons employed receive appropriate supervision and to ensure there is a system in place to monitor the performance of the home against its Statement of Purpose. This included monitoring and signing the home's records at least once a month. These have now been addressed satisfactorily. The name of the regulatory body is now included within the young person's guide and can be found on the young person's information board. The home is notifying the regulatory body of any matters set out within Schedule 5 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2001, all staff are now receiving regular supervision and the manager is signing the homes records on a monthly basis.

The home was asked to obtain for all staff, before they start work at the home, all the information set out in Regulation 26, Schedule 2. This has not been completed and therefore remains a regulatory action.

A recommendation was set for the home to ensure that a written record is made of the circumstances of all incidents of absent without authority. This record needs to state the action taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return, reasons given by the child for being absent and any action taken in the light of those reasons. This has not been met and therefore has been repeated in this report.

The home was also asked to ensure placement plans include religious and spiritual needs of young people. This recommendation has not been met and has been repeated in this report.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

There are serious concerns with regards to the lack of essential information on safe recruitment practices within this home. For example, it is unclear whether Criminal Record Bureau checks (CRB) have been carried out on two of the staff presently working at this home. Photographic identity is missing from several files. These concerns were raised at the last inspection and have not been satisfactorily addressed. This puts into doubt how the service is safeguarding and protecting young people from inappropriate staff. The recruitment process is not robust and may have an impact on the safety and welfare of young people living at the home. All visitors to the home are monitored but records show that not all visitors are recorded as having left the building.

The home has a good range of facilities to provide young people with private space, for example to see visitors or use a telephone to make private phone calls. Staff say that young people are encouraged to respect each others private space and belongings. However, a young person said, 'I am not happy with staff cleaning my room or checking things when I am not there and that there is no point having a private storage box as staff have keys to them anyway'. This staff practice demonstrates that the young person's privacy is not respected and that young people's views are not given consideration.

Young people receive clear information of how to make a complaint in their young person's guide, through young person's meetings and an independent visitor. Young people are able to raise any issue or concern through effective formal and informal communication systems, including contact to external independent people or agencies. Staff take young people's concerns seriously and respond promptly.

Young people are safeguarded through good policies, procedures and by action taken by staff on child protection issues. The organisation ensures that staff are suitably trained and understand their role and responsibilities regarding protection and safeguarding. Young people say that they like the staff at the home and that they feel safe. However, the records of a child absent without authority do not have all the detail required in the national minimum standards and regulations. This could impact on a young person's welfare and safety when a child is absent without authority.

Young people are given information in the young person's guide about the prevention of bullying and is discussed with them through key working sessions and children's meetings. Two young people took part in an anti-bullying poster campaign for Derbyshire and won. Staff say that they challenge any offensive, hurtful language or actions and make others aware of behaviours that may be considered to be oppressive. However, bullying issues are not reflected in a young person's behaviour plan and risks to others or from others are not identified within the young person's risk assessment.

Young people's care plans have good information within them and risk assessments identify behaviour and how this will be managed. Positive interactions were observed throughout this inspection. However, the recordings of physical intervention and sanctions did not record the effectiveness, entries were lacking in detail so could be seen as compliance and staff do not sign their names in full. This does not ensure that young people's needs are addressed effectively, appropriately and does not show how these needs will be met.

Young people are aware of the fire safety procedures and take part in regular fire drills. Staff ensure that all equipment is regularly checked. However, young people are not protected from health risks within the home, for example cleaning products are not stored correctly, house risk assessments do not identify risks and it is not clear whether staff or young people are aware of any risks. This does not ensure that young people live in homes that provide physical safety and security.

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/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001

and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Std.	Action	Due date
19	ensure there is a procedure to be followed when any child accommodated in a children's home is absent without permission. Specifically in relation to recording when they have returned, circumstances, staff full names and action taken (Regulation(16 (4) (b))	03/06/2011
26	ensure that any unnecessary risks to the health and safety of children accommodated in the home are identified and so far as possible eliminated (Regulation 23 (c))	03/06/2011
22	ensure that all records in regards to methods of control include all details set down within the Regulation.(Regulation 17 (4) (b) (f))	03/06/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure that there is a system in place to record all visits made to the home specifically relating to visitors signing out (NMS 27.11)
- ensure that the home and staff respect a child's wish for privacy specifically relating to access of bedrooms (NMS 9.1)
- ensure that the registered person carries out recorded risk assessments of the times, places and circumstances in which the risk of bullying is greatest (NMS 18.5)
- ensure placement plans include cultural, religious, language and racial needs and how they will be met. (NMS 2.1)