

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	13 January 2010
Inspector	Susan Mullin
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	5 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

The children's home can accommodate up to four boys and/or girls aged between 11 and under 18 years of age, with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home provides medium to long-term care.

The home is a large detached residential property on a street with other similar residential properties. The children have single bedrooms, with bathrooms located on the ground and first floor. The lounge, dining/kitchen, education room and staff office are on the ground floor. There is a large garden to the rear of the property and car parking at the front of the home.

The home is close to local shops and leisure facilities and there is good access to public transport.

Summary

This was a key unannounced inspection of the service to assess compliance with the national minimum standards for children's homes. The home was assessed under the headings of Every Child Matters. Being healthy, staying safe, positive contribution and economic well-being received a judgement of satisfactory. Enjoying and achieving and organisation received a judgement of good and overall the home was judged as satisfactory.

The inspection focused on arrangements to meet children and young people's individual needs, to safeguard their welfare and protect them from harm, to ensure children and young people have a say in their day-to-day care and to ensure they live full and enjoyable lives. The inspection also considered how the home is managed and how staff are supported.

At the time of the inspection four young people were living at the home.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Three recommendations made at the last inspection have now been met. These included improvements to the dining/kitchen area, providing more security to the home and including Ofsted details in the young person's guide.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people are provided with choice and encouraged to contribute to menu planning and preparation of meals at the home. Staff support young people with information that helps their understanding of what constitutes healthy eating and a balanced diet. The staff receive training in basic food hygiene.

The health and social needs of young people are identified and recorded through the use of formal health plans. Staff at the home ensure that the health, emotional and medical needs of young people are practically addressed in an age-appropriate and focused manner. Young people are registered with local health professionals and attend health appointments with staff support. The home provides the young people with good, informed advice, guidance and support

with healthy living, medical, emotional and sexual health matters consistent with their assessed needs and level of understanding. This is achieved by consultation with a multidisciplinary group.

Young people's health and safety is also promoted by policies and procedures for the safe storage and administration of medication. Administration records demonstrate that staff are following pharmacy instructions in relation to the health needs of individual young people. However, there is some duplication in the record keeping and there is no photograph of the young person on file. Staff are able to respond to accidents and unforeseen medical needs because they have access to first aid boxes and have been trained in basic first aid skills. However, some staff require an update in medication training. This does not have a negative impact on young people as there is always a member of staff on duty who has the required medication administration training. Young people's health and safety is further promoted by managers who monitor all accidents and injuries that occur in the home.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people's privacy is respected. Personal information about them is confidentially and securely stored and staff are sensitive with how they communicate about young people with other professionals. Young people have access to a telephone that they can use in private. They are provided with their own lockable bedrooms and made aware of the particular circumstances in which these may need to be searched.

The welfare and physical safety of young people living at the home is promoted by staff following the home's policies and procedures. These have been developed to comply with regulatory requirements and good practice in areas of child protection that include countering bullying, effective behaviour management, dealing with missing persons and safeguarding children. Procedures conform with the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The home provide statutory training that informs and equips staff to care for young people safely. In this way young people are protected by staff who understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

Young people know how to raise any concerns or complaints. Although the home has formal policies and procedures, concerns are usually effectively addressed long before they become a complaint. No formal complaints have been made since the last inspection. Young people have access to independent representatives where required and the home's complaints policy is summarised in the young person's guide.

Young people are encouraged to develop socially acceptable behaviour and respond positively to the implemented boundaries. Staff are trained in behaviour management and physical intervention. Young people are aware of the expectations being made from them prior to moving to the home. The staff team understand the range of challenging behaviours individual young people may present and how these may be effectively addressed. All behavioural incidents are evaluated by the home's manager. The views and opinions of young people are always taken into account in relation to any sanction to improve staff practices.

Staff confirm their awareness of potential dangers to young people through risk assessing aspects of safety in the living environment; however not all staff or young people have undertaken adequate fire drills. There are effective procedures in place for the monitoring of visitors to the home. The home's recruitment and selection process ensures that appointing

new staff is thorough and includes the need for a criminal records bureau check; however no new staff have been appointed since the last inspection. There is a current Public and Employee Liability insurance certificate for the home but this does not specify the name and address of the home.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young people are cared for by a staff team who demonstrate a good understanding and awareness of child development and how to help young people understand and moderate some of their challenging behaviour.

The home aims to enhance young people's self confidence and practical abilities in accordance with their care and placement plan. Young people are assisted to access both in-house and community-based activities that help develop particular interests and skills, promote self esteem and are age appropriate. The staff team try to stimulate young people's positive awareness of gender issues, diversity, inclusion and tolerance both within the home and the wider community.

The staff fully support young people to attend and achieve in education. Young people's attendance in educational settings is good and the staff are effective at enabling young people to achieve their potential. Young people can follow their own individual interests at school and also in their leisure time. The staff watch and encourage young people when they are partaking in community activities and this helps young people to feel valued and supported.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Admissions to the home are assessed and planned between placing authorities and the provider. Young people are invited at an early stage to contribute their views about moving into the home. Care planning is effective because young people are provided with an in-house placement plan, that identifies the purpose of the placement and how the placing authority's formal care plan can be achieved. Young people are encouraged to contribute to the contents and aims of their plan. Placement plans are discussed by the staff team regularly to ensure that they can accurately reflect the care being provided and record those changes considered necessary to improve how care is delivered.

Young people are practically supported to maintain contact with their families, where this is permitted, by the arrangements detailed within their care plans. These plans make explicit the authorised arrangements for contact between young people, their family, friends and professional workers such as social workers. In keeping with the young people's plans, the owning of a mobile phone and unsupervised visits can be goals confirming trust and self responsibility.

Young people are supported and encouraged to express their views and opinions about their life in the home. The young person's guide provides information about the advocacy services available to them if they need to speak to someone independently.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is satisfactory.

The home's location is within easy reach of the town centre and has convenient access to local recreation, leisure and further educational facilities that can assist a young person to integrate into the wider community.

The design, layout and use of the accommodation allow young people to receive individual care and privacy. All young people have single bedrooms where they keep their personal belongings. They are able to exercise choice in personalising their own rooms.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Young people's individual needs are fully assessed and staff work hard to enable all young people to achieve their potential, having regard for their diverse needs, wishes and circumstances.

The Statement of Purpose for the home includes the majority of the information prescribed by schedule 1 of the children's home regulations. However, this does not include the type of behaviours that the home can accommodate. There is a children's guide that provides a useful source of information for young people placed at the home. However, information regarding sanctions does not include all the sanctions used in the home. The children's guide is not available in a child-friendly format for the younger child.

Young people living at the home are supported with every aspect of their daily living by the home's team of competent and trained staff. Staff show commitment to providing safe and consistent care. The experienced and qualified Registered Manager and his support staff, provide continuity of care. Staff have attended induction and statutory training to help them provide care specific to young people's particular needs. Over 80% of care staff have completed the National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. Two members of staff spoken to confirmed that regular formal supervision is not taking place, however.

The staff rota confirms the complement of staff in the home and details their full names. The rota effectively covers all shifts and night duty with both waking and sleeping-in staff. Shortfalls in the home's rota are currently covered by in-house staff. The registered person has a process to monitor the operational efficiency and quality of care being provided by the home. Monthly monitoring through the use of a Regulation 33 visitor confirm that the home is operating within the scope of its Statement of Purpose.

Young people's individual case files are stored and arranged in a manner that is accessible to the staff team while retaining confidentiality. Young people are made aware of the contents of their files and know they can request access to them should they need to.

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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31	demonstrate arrangements have been made to ensure that all persons employed receive appropriate training, with specific reference to training in safety with medicines (Regulation 27(4)(a))	24 February 2010
26	ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that the persons working at the home and, so far as practicable, the children accommodated there, are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire (Regulation 32 (e))	23 February 2010
31	ensure that staff receive appropriate supervision (Regulation 27(4)(a))	23 February 2010
1	ensure the Statement of Purpose consists of a statement as to the matters listed in Schedule 1 with specific details of the type of young people that can be catered for at the home (Regulation (4) (1))	26 February 2010
1	ensure that the young person's guide contains all the information described in regulations. (Regulation 4 (4))	26 February 2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure that appropriate medication administration records are maintained and that a photograph of the young person is kept on that record (NMS 13.2)
- ensure certificates of insurance specify the name and address of the particular home. (NMS 26.9)