

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	17 March 2010
Inspector	David Morgan
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	13 January 2010
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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

This children's home can accommodate up to four boys and/or girls aged between 11 and 17 years of age who have emotional and behavioural difficulties; it provides medium to long-term care.

The home is a detached property on a main road amongst similar residential properties. The young people 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 garden to the rear of the property and car parking at the front. There is easy access to local shops and leisure facilities and there is good access to public transport.

During this visit one of the four residents was able to assist with the inspection.

Summary

The overall judgement for this interim unannounced inspection remains satisfactory. This inspection considers the previous actions and recommendations and safety issues only. Progress has occurred with meeting previous actions and recommendations, as described below. Further work is necessary on fire drills and some types of staff training in particular. Overall, there is clear evidence of systematic work being undertaken to address the challenging issues posed by the needs of young people.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection five actions and two recommendations were raised. Most of these have been addressed. For instance, the organisation of staff has been improved by appropriate staff supervision and the initiation of medicine administration training. The necessary improvements to the Statement of Purpose and children's guide are in place. Fire drills are not occurring in the most appropriate way, though, and do not provide an adequate level of training. Insurance certificates do not indicate the name and address of the service as required but this has minimal direct impact on young people.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people's welfare is safeguarded by the way that medicines are administered. Also, staff training is underway to ensure that staff are competent in this area of their work.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people's privacy is respected well and information about them is confidentially handled. Occasionally staff have reason to search bedrooms but the log does not indicate that the reasons are discussed with the young person concerned. This is an important issue for young people for whom bedroom privacy is a sensitive matter. If young people have a complaint they are able to resolve it promptly because they are aware of the procedure; this occurs only rarely.

In other respects too, the welfare of young people is promoted effectively. Favourable staffing levels are maintained as well as a gender-balance, whenever possible, and there is minimal staff turnover. Such arrangements help to ensure that issues such as bullying and being absent without authority are managed appropriately. The latter is an ongoing challenge that staff manage well. Young people are treated positively on their return and police involvement only occurs when it is considered absolutely necessary. Being absent without authority and other negative behaviours are addressed in placement plans and risk assessments. There is a clear policy for the application of sanctions and a restorative approach is used when possible and applicable. It is notable that there are few physical interventions. On the other hand, staff do not receive training about self harming behaviour, which is a challenging feature of their work from time to time and has a major impact on young people.

The safety of young people is assured by means of appropriate recruitment procedures. In addition, all safety measures are up to date and include fire safety checks. However, fire drills are not sufficiently realistic. It is imperative that all staff, and young people where possible, are protected by effective training events addressing the range of scenarios that emergencies such as fire may create. Of less impact is the fact that insurance details are in place but do not show the name of the service as required.

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 good.

A clear and comprehensive statement on how the home operates is available for parents and others needing this information. It is also supplemented by an improved guide for new young people. Staff are undertaking medicine administration training, which helps to ensure that young people's health is maintained safely, but training on self-harming behaviour does not occur. On the other hand, staff have regular opportunities to discuss concerns and shortfalls in their knowledge with their line managers in regular and up-to-date supervision meetings.

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
26	ensure by means of drills and practises at suitable intervals that the persons working at the home, and so far as practicable, the	26 April 2010

	children living there, are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire, with regard to using various scenarios (Regulation 32(1)(e))	
31	ensure that all persons employed receive appropriate training, with regard to knowledge specific to their role in the home including self harming behaviour. (Regulation 27)(4))	24 May 2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the reasons for room searches are explained to young people and documented (NMS 9.8)
- ensure certificates of insurance specify the name and address of the home. (NMS 26.9)