

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspection date	08/02/2011
Inspector	Chris Fuller
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	12/11/2010
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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 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 is a detached property located in a residential estate. The home provides placements for four young people of either gender from 11 years to under 18 years of age. The home provides therapeutic care using the transactional analysis approach. There were four young people in residence at the time of inspection. The accommodation is domestic in size and presentation. Communal areas include a dining room, lounge and activity room. The main office, staff toilet, laundry and kitchen are also on the ground floor. The rear garden is mainly lawn with a paved area up to the house. The frontage has tarmac driveways with a footpath to the front door. The home has its own vehicle for transport.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

The unannounced random inspection visit of the home was made to monitor the key national minimum standards in the outcome area of staying safe. Progress, in respect of the recommendations made at the previous inspection, was also monitored.

The inspection found that the management and staff are fully committed to the delivery of high quality care for young people. Staff consistently provide warmth and security for young people in a safe care environment. Young people enjoy the support provided by staff and continue to feel safe and protected whilst learning how to keep themselves safe. There are no actions and one recommendation is set as a result of this visit. The issues relate to staff recruitment files.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were two recommendations made at the previous inspection in respect of signing of the risk assessment and staff recruitment records. Progress has been made, with all staff contributing to the review and update of risk assessments which are subsequently signed off by the Registered Manager. This means all staff and management are fully informed and aware of the changes made and current strategies in place. The staff recruitment files have been updated to include previous employment details so that there is a full employment history of staff.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The welfare of young people is well promoted, young people are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse. Young people enjoy homely accommodation, decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard and providing physical safety and security.

Staff show a high regard for the privacy of the young people and to maintaining appropriate levels of confidentiality. Staff always respect the privacy and dignity of young people and their views are given full consideration. Young people personalise their individual bedrooms with en suite facilities. Young people benefit from excellent facilities providing a choice of rooms for one-to-one meetings, meeting with their visitors and educational or leisure activities. In addition, young people have access to a telephone booth for private calls. Young people's files and records are held securely and are confidential. Staff promote the self-esteem of young people through developing mutual respect. All young people are encouraged to respect each other's private space and belongings.

All permanent staff have been trained in dealing with complaints. They show themselves to be very open to listening and responding to the concerns and complaints of young people. There is an excellent range of information available in different formats for young people on how to make a complaint. In addition, the complaints officer and a visitor from the National Youth Advisory Service regularly visit and attend young people's meetings so that they are able to speak with someone independent of the home. Any complaints or concerns raised are taken seriously and dealt with promptly. Young people are able to raise any issues or concerns through effective formal and informal communication systems, including contact with external independent people or agencies.

The home has a comprehensive range of policies and procedures for all safeguarding practices in respect of child protection, countering bullying, absence of a child without authority and notification of significant events. Staff receive current guidance and a wide range of training in all aspects of child protection, safeguarding and related topics. Staff are extremely vigilant in monitoring the health and welfare of young people and liaise appropriately with other professionals. High priority is always given to the supervision and support of young people so that they are kept safe.

Young people confirm that they feel free from bullying within the home and that there are staff they can speak to who will deal with anything that is troubling them. Staff are proactive and consistently challenge any offensive or oppressive language

or behaviour. They raise awareness of young people about the harmful effects of bullying and what action to take so that they can keep themselves and others safe at home and in the community. Young people receive useful information, including contact details so that they may contact advocates or independent agencies.

Management and staff work effectively in partnership with other professionals and develop protocols for young people who go missing or are absent without authority. Staff value the service and support provided by the police street teams who work effectively, together with families where appropriate, to monitor young people's absconding patterns and protect them in the community. Staff maintain high levels of supervision and support of young people, successfully engaging them positively in the daily routines of the home and local community. There is an exemplary outcome of no incidence of absence over the past inspection year.

Young people are assisted to develop socially acceptable behaviour through encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff response to inappropriate behaviour which continues to be outstanding. Staff receive training in a range of behaviour management methodologies including attachment theory, restorative approach and specifically Team Teach. They also have access to therapeutic services and other specialist support for the emotional and mental health of young people. Individual and group risk assessments are thorough and comprehensive and address the group dynamics in respect of a broad range of behaviours. Individual behaviour management plans are exemplary with details of potential risk factors and a range of management strategies and actions. This means the individual needs of young people are fully considered and staff provide a consistent response. High priority is given to developing warm, nurturing, relationships with young people that enhance their self-esteem and self-confidence.

The home has regularly updated, detailed, risk assessments for all aspects of safety of the premises and grounds including fire, accidents and young people's behaviour and activities. Staff receive training in all safe working topics and demonstrate a sound working knowledge of the home's health and safety procedures. This means they effectively implement safe working practice in the daily activities in the home and in the community. Young people are consistently well informed of the importance of keeping themselves safe through daily prompting, guidance and discussion of health and safety strategies.

The management have a well established and effective system for the vetting and supervision of visitors. The management have established a comprehensive system, however, the recruitment records still do not include details of the interview of applicants. There is evidence of good practice in place such as, three yearly renewal of criminal records bureau checks, reference, and telephone confirmation of references. Management conscientiously ensure there are effective systems for the recruitment of suitable staff to work with young people.

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):

- maintain the information specified in Schedule 2 in respect of each member of staff, in particular interview minutes. (NMS 27)