

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Jackie Graves
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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 provides care and accommodation for seven young people from the age of 11 to under 18 years. The home looks after young people who have emotional, behavioural or mild learning difficulties. The service is based on the pedagogic principles of care.

The building is situated in a residential area close to the seashore. The accommodation comprises a dining room, lounge, kitchen, laundry and games room. Young people have their own bedrooms with en-suite facilities. In addition, there are two semi-independent flats which each have their own entrance, dining/living area, kitchen and bathroom. There is a grassed garden to the front and rear of the building and an area for off-road parking.

Seven young people are currently placed in the home. Two were in the home at the time of the inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

At this unannounced interim inspection, only the key standards under staying safe were assessed. Individual outcomes, as well as the overall quality rating, were not reviewed on this occasion.

This is a good home. Behaviour management is a strength. Fire safety is taken seriously. Staff use constructive sanctions and incentives to help young people make progress. Appropriate levels of privacy are maintained. Staff follow effective procedures when young people do not return home when expected. Staff are proactive in helping keep young people safe and in helping them to understand risks to their safety.

One recommendation is made as a result of this inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

This section is not relevant as no actions or recommendations were made at the last inspection.

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.

Staff are proactive in helping young people learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, through the 'Teen Spirit' initiative, staff promote discussion and learning about topics such as bullying and alcohol misuse. There are effective links with professionals external to the home, for example with a nurse and the police, to help young people learn more about how to keep safe.

Young people's privacy is respected. They have access to all parts of the home, including the offices. However, staff make sure that confidential information, stored in offices, remains secure and that private conversations are protected. The provision of en suite bathrooms, rather than communally used facilities, has greatly improved levels of privacy for young people when bathing and showering.

Good, nurturing relationships with staff ensure that young people feel comfortable in raising any concerns or complaints they may have, although levels of complaints remain low. Additionally, information on external organisations they may complain to is provided, and young people have the opportunity to raise any concerns with a children's rights officer. These good arrangements ensure young people may be confident that they will be listened to and their concerns taken seriously.

Efficient policies on bullying, safeguarding and behaviour management assist staff in keeping young people safe. Bullying is not an issue in the home. Staff react swiftly to help young people understand the impact of any behaviour which may be interpreted as bullying, for example name calling. Useful information is given to young people to help them understand what bullying is and how they may seek help. Staff help ensure young people can use the internet safely and learn about potential dangers from its use. Safeguarding is given a high profile in the home, with ongoing staff training in safeguarding issues.

There are effective systems for staff to follow should young people not return when they are expected. Clear records show staff understand the risks to young people from such absences and are proactive in securing their safe return to the home. The reasons for young people's absence is then fully explored to ensure their wellbeing and prevent further periods of absence.

Behaviour management is a strength of this home. Staff work very sensitively with any challenges the young people may present, to help them understand the reasons for their behaviour and the impact it may have on others. Positive sanctions are used to help young people make progress with their behaviour, for example, writing

letters of apology and helping staff repair damage. There are opportunities for young people to earn incentives, which are tailored to individual needs. Restraints are rarely used and young people are invited to comment on these and any sanctions to ensure their views are heard.

A thorough approach to checking fire fighting equipment and alarms, with regular drills involving all in the home, ensures young people live in premises where fire safety is promoted. Windows are restricted for young people's safety. One window may not be sufficiently restricted and staff agreed to check this is safe.

At the last inspection, the home was found to have a very robust recruitment policy which ensures staff are thoroughly vetted before starting work in the home. This was not assessed on this occasion but will be reviewed at the next inspection. In addition to recruitment files, the home keeps the required basic information on the staff employed.

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):

- ensure windows do not present any hazard to young people. (NMS 26)