

Inspection report for Children's Home

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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 up to seven children aged between eight and 14 years of age who have emotional or behavioural difficulties. The home is situated in a quiet residential area and the accommodation comprises of a dining room, lounge, play room and study room. The children each have their own bedroom. A bathroom and a shower room are on the first floor. There is a garden to the rear of the building which has a grassed area and is used by the children for playing games. There is space at the front of the house for parking cars. There are currently five children living in the home, three of whom were present during parts of the inspection and contributed to the inspection process.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

At this unannounced full inspection, all key standards were inspected. The overall rating is good. Being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution and organisation are all rated good. Achieving economic well-being is rated satisfactory.

Young people's health is effectively supported though comprehensive health care plans detailing individual needs. Medication systems ensure that medication is stored, administered and recorded appropriately. Young people are encouraged to eat healthily and enjoy regular and varied activities. Staff are effectively supported by the manager and there is a strong focus on the needs of the individual young people.

Young people are supported to develop positive behaviour through appropriate behaviour management strategies. Bullying behaviour is addressed appropriately therefore reducing its impact on young people.

Young people are supported to attend school or other educational resources utilised to enable their educational needs to be met. A range of recreational activities are available and provide opportunities for young people to develop individual skills and abilities. Young people's needs are comprehensively assessed and placement plans provide clear information about how individual needs are to be met. These plans are reviewed on a regular basis. The accommodation is generally reasonably well maintained although some areas of the home are poorly maintained. Staff are managed effectively and efficiently and are well supported through supervision and training. The recruitment and selection of staff is robust.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection in March 2010, a recommendation was made to record full details of incidents of physical intervention as soon after the event as possible. The service has responded to this by ensuring that staff are aware of importance of this. Records inspected during this inspection demonstrated that this recommendation has been addressed. Records are up-to-date and recorded as soon as possible after the event.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young people are supported with the planning of meals. Individual likes and dislikes with regards to meals are obtained on individual basis and also during weekly discussions. This information enables effective planning of menus. Staff are aware of the importance of ensuring that cultural needs are included within menu planning as well as the promotion of healthy eating. This is reflected within the documentation of meals served. Young people say that they enjoy the meals at the home. Meals are eaten together within the dining area and are used as positive social occasions.

The health care needs of the young people are promoted positively. All young people are registered with health care professionals, including doctors, dentist and opticians. Records evidence robust health planning and include actions to ensure young people's health needs are met. The home has developed positive links with health care services within the community to continue to promote good health outcomes for young people. Staff have appropriate first aid training.

Prescribed medication is stored securely within a lockable cabinet. Staff have received training on the administration of medication and this is updated on a regular basis. The home ensures that appropriate medical consent is obtained and recorded on individual young people's files for both prescribed and non-prescribed medication

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The privacy of young people is promoted and observed by staff at the home. Confidential information is stored securely. Young people have access to a telephone to make and receive telephone calls in private with any restrictions on this clearly identified within their placement plans.

Young people are aware of the procedure for making a complaint. Information is provided both verbally and also within the children's guide. Key worker staff ensure that young people understand the procedure as part of the induction process to the home. Systems are in place to record complaints appropriately for both complaints from young people and also external complaints. Staff are provided with information about how to respond to complaints. This ensures that any complaints received are

responded to appropriately and there are clear outcomes, with complainants receiving appropriate information regarding these.

The safety and rights of staff and young people are protected. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place and all staff have undertaken training in child protection and safeguarding. This ensures that all staff know the procedure to follow if there is a safeguarding issue, this promotes the safety and well-being of the young people. Staff are aware of the importance in promoting an atmosphere in the home where bullying is not acceptable. A bullying policy and procedure is in place and the staff have received guidance on this. Young people say that they feel that staff support them well if they have any concerns about being bullied.

Systems are in place, underpinned by policies and procedures, in the event of a young person reported missing from the home. Individual risk assessments are in place. These detail the response for each young person as agreed within their placement plan. Records maintained within the home contain clear information about any incidents of young people missing from home, the actions followed and the support provided to the young person on their return to the home.

Young people are involved in the consultation of how the home operates to provide care and support as agreed within the Statement of Purpose and individual placement plans. The home enables young people to achieve individual goals and promotes positive behaviour. All staff have had training in promoting positive behaviour and positive handling/physical intervention. Recording systems are in place for any physical intervention or sanctions made. The structures and boundaries in place are accepted by young people, who view their stay at the home as being positive.

The manager and staff are aware of the requirement to ensure that any significant event is notified to the appropriate people in accordance with the Children's Homes Regulations 2001. Details are also maintained at the home. This ensures that the welfare of children is promoted and appropriate action to any significant event is clearly documented.

General health and safety issues are addressed within a range of risk assessments. These identify individual risks and risks around the home, as well as away from it. These assessments are kept under review and updated as required. Appropriate procedures are in place for ensuring that the health and safety of young people and staff with regards fire safety and appropriate service contracts are in place for gas and electrical equipment. There are suitable recruitment procedures in place to ensure that staff have the necessary skills, experience and knowledge to promote the needs of young people. The service also ensures that all staff have an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure in place prior to commencing employment. These are updated every three years. All visitors to the home are required to sign the visitors book. This ensures that staff are aware of who the visitor is and the purpose of the visit. This further promotes the safety and well-being of the young people living at the home.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young people clearly value and benefit from the relationships they have with staff. Staff are consistently described as 'kind' by the young people and the relationships between staff and young people are very positive. These positive relationships create a calm and pleasant atmosphere within the home and staff are supportive and responsive to the needs of the young people. Each child receives care in relation to their individual needs while ensuring that the group of children maintain harmonious and positive relationships.

Young people are supported and encouraged to attend education and staff work hard to motivate young people to attend their individual education. The home continues to develop positive relations with schools. This enables open and effective communication in supporting young people with their educational needs. When a young person has been excluded from school, appropriate support is provided to the individual young person and staff liaise with education officers to support a young person recommence school.

Young people have good opportunities to participate in a range of activities, which are supported and encouraged by staff. Individual records are maintained of all activities that the young people participate in and where appropriate, photographs are taken to enable young people to share their experiences. Young people can pursue individual interests if they wish and these are actively encouraged by staff.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young people's needs are comprehensively assessed and there are good written placement plans in place which provides staff with clear and up-to-date information. This enables staff to provide care in accordance with young people's individual needs. Young people's placements plans are regularly reviewed and updated when changes are considered necessary. All young people's needs are reviewed within the looked after children timescales and changes in relation to services provided to young people are changed appropriately when there are any changes in the young people's lives.

Wherever possible, moving into the home is planned and young people have an opportunity to visit and meet other young people and staff. Where this is not possible, information about the home is provided and consideration is given to their individual needs as well as the needs of the other young people living at the home.

Young people enjoy regular and planned contact with friends and family and these arrangements are sensitively supported and encouraged by staff. Young people have detailed contact plans which provides staff with up-to-date and relevant information which enables them to properly manage contact arrangements.

Young people are supported and encouraged to express their views both formally and informally about issues that affect their lives including practice within the home. Young people's views and opinions are taken seriously and enable staff to change practice within the home where appropriate. This creates a culture of placing the young people's needs at the centre of staff practice.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people are encouraged to learn independence skills relative to their age and development; these include walking to school on their own or into town, tidying their bedrooms (with assistance from staff) and being involved with cooking and other domestic chores.

The home is a spacious detached property with gardens and play areas for the young people. Re-development and refurbishment plans are in place. However, a date for this has yet to be confirmed. Due to this, some areas of the home are showing signs of wear and tear. The lounge is decorated and furnished to a satisfactory standard and the dining room has been redecorated and refurbished to provide young people with a pleasant area to enjoy meal times. The kitchen is industrial in design although young people are encouraged and supported to use it as a domestic kitchen. Each young person has their own bedroom that contains appropriate furnishings. However, these are showing some signs of wear and tear. Staff have supported the young people to place a range of photographs and pictures to create a homely atmosphere.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The Statement of Purpose contains relevant, up-to-date and all required information about the home. This enables the reader to have a clear understanding of the role and function of the home and how staff will support the young people. The children's guide provides a simple and age appropriate version of the Statement of Purpose providing young people with clear and current information about the care they should expect to receive whilst living in the home.

Young people are cared for by competent and capable staff and there is great value placed on good quality relationships between staff and young people. Staff receive regular and relevant training supporting them to provide good quality care to the young people. Staff receive good support from the management team both formally and informally enabling them to perform their duties confidently and competently. There is a good blend of experienced staff, and the staff team has benefited from few changes. This ensures continuity of care for the young people living at the home.

Visits on behalf of the responsible individual occur monthly and a written report is

produced promptly. These visits contribute effectively to the management of the home as they identify strengths and weaknesses from a more objective point of view thereby assisting the manager in reviewing the quality of the service.

Case files are well maintained and kept securely in the staff office. Files contain all required information in relation to Schedule 6 and provide a good written record of the progress made by young people living in the home.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Young people receive individualised care and their specific needs are well met. The culture of the home reflects the backgrounds of young people cared for and there are good opportunities for young people to learn about different cultures and actively engage in the local community.

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
24	ensure that all parts of the children's home used by the children are kept clean and reasonably decorated and maintained (Regulation 31) (2) (e).	31/01/2011