

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC037657
Inspection date	10 February 2010
Inspector	Fiona Parker
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	5 October 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 home has been operational for a number of years and is well established within the local area.

The home is an extended three bedroom end of terrace house within a residential area, close to local shops, transport links and community resources. The home provides care and accommodation for two young people, of either gender, between the ages of 12 and 16.

Accommodation is provided over two floors, the ground floor includes a kitchen, lounge, dining room and young people's lounge. Young people have their own bedrooms which are located on the upper floor.

On the day of this visit, two young people were accommodated although they were not present for the duration of the visit. Therefore young people's views have not been directly sought at this inspection.

Summary

This is an interim inspection to review the progress made in addressing the recommendations from the previous key inspection and to assess the key standards under the staying safe outcome area.

The key inspection was carried out on 5 October 2009 and the home was judged as outstanding.

This home continues to provide an excellent level of care to young people. Staff are committed and experienced and this clearly shows in their understanding of young people's needs and the support they offer to young people. The home keeps robust records which clearly detail their actions and practice. Safeguarding practice is robust and young people's welfare is a high priority.

This inspection identifies two actions and one recommendation, as a result the overall judgement for this home has changed from outstanding to good. One action results from the home admitting a young person in an emergency; this is not part of the current Statement of Purpose. A second action relates to ensuring there is a procedure in the home to guide staff on the process they should follow should they need to refer a safeguarding matter. One recommendation is also made in relation to the policy for room searches and detailing how young people know what to expect.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The key inspection identified three recommendations for the home to take action upon. Two of the recommendations were quickly addressed, this related to reinstating a young person with the local medical practice following a mistake made in registering them full-time within school health services. The second recommendation related to a missing section from the Statement of Purpose, this was immediately located and forwarded to Ofsted the following day. The third recommendation related to the Regulation 33 visits and ensuring complaints are

reviewed as part of their visit. The reports now show complaints are reviewed monthly. The three previous recommendations are therefore met.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Young people's health is fully promoted and robust arrangements are in place to ensure full access to a range of health services. Staff fully support young people to arrange and attend appointments. Accurate records detail the health history of each young person and all staff are suitably trained in first aid to respond to day-to-day minor ailments.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people's welfare and safety is protected by an experienced and committed staff team. Staff are fully aware of young people's rights and respect their privacy and confidentiality. Records detail that respectful communication takes place between staff and young people. Good practice also extends to the safe and secure storage of young people's files and information. Staff are fully aware of good practice in respect of any room searches and records show none have taken place. However, while there are policies in place for entering rooms and the searching of possessions, these do not fully cover the expected practice for room searches. This may not fully guide all staff in how to carry out a room search. In addition, information is not available for young people on what to expect when their room is searched so as to help them protect their privacy. This is a recommendation.

Robust practice is in place, in respect of complaints, sanctions and restraints, which fully meets the expected standards. Staff are very clear about their roles and responsibilities and are supported by frequent relevant training. All actions and practice is diligently recorded including young people's views and comments.

There has been a recent period of instability as a result of the dynamics between young people living in the home. This has brought a number of complaints from the surrounding community which the manager and staff have actively sought to resolve. Records show appropriate action has brought satisfactory conclusions for all parties. Young people are encouraged to recognise consequences and make amends, such as apologies. Staff give praise to young people to encourage them to act responsibly and to reinforce their positive behaviour. At times, police involvement has supported addressing the concerns in the community. Records show absences without authority are not a frequent issue but appropriate action and policies are in place for staff to use should this be required.

Bullying is not tolerated and staff take decisive action to ensure bullying does not escalate in the home. A number of bullying concerns have been raised since the last inspection. Records show young people feel comfortable to raise their concerns and staff take robust action to fully protect young people and address the expectations they have within the home. Staff consider the 'whole picture' and address each individual's needs.

Robust measures are taken to protect young people in a variety of situations. Records show proactive measures can quickly be put in place to benefit young people's awareness of safety and risks. For example, a fire officer visited to speak with young people about fire risks in response to concerns from staff. Also an information technology engineer has visited in respect

of internet safety. Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures are in place and staff are knowledgeable and fully trained in their responsibilities in this area of their work. There is good evidence to show that young people's welfare is safeguarded; however, there is a shortfall in the procedures outlining the initial actions and process to follow within the home to fully ensure robust and consistent practice. Although there is no concern for safeguarding practice this results in an action to fully comply with regulations.

Excellent practice ensures physical safety in the home and immediate environment. Fire checks, risk assessments and drills are all in place and undertaken in line with standards. Robust risk assessments cover a full range of potential risks and demonstrate good analysis of strategies to minimise such risks. For example, there are risk assessments in respect to fire safety, flu pandemic, internet use, and young people climbing out of windows. Young people's individual risk assessments clearly outline their individual characteristics and are based on a good assessment of the potential known risks. These clearly link to information held in incidents records and central logs. This ensures young people have their needs individually assessed and their safety is fully promoted.

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.

This visit found the home to be operating outside of their current Statement of Purpose due to admitting a young person, on an emergency basis, over a weekend recently. This results in an action. The Registered Manager was not part of the decision making in respect to this. A senior manager reports the intention is for all the homes to admit emergency placements and it is unclear how this has been overlooked in the Statement of Purpose for this home. Although this appears to be an oversight, the Statement of Purpose does not set out the arrangements for accommodating young people in an emergency. However, records show all appropriate arrangements are in place for young people should they be accommodated in an emergency. Due to the experience of the staff team, this results in young people's needs being fully considered and met.

Regulation 33 monitoring visits and reports are completed monthly and submitted to Ofsted as required. The format for the visits has recently been revised and includes more detail and analysis of practice in the home, including complaints and bullying issues. The reports now show a good assessment of the home's functions against its Statement of Purpose and reports on key areas. The most recent Regulation 33 visit had taken place prior to the emergency placement.

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
1	ensure the registered person shall compile in relation to the children's home a written statement (referred to as 'the statement of purpose') which shall consist of the matters listed in Schedule 1. This is with particular reference to emergency admissions (Regulation 4 (1))	12 March 2010
17	ensure the registered person prepares and implements a written policy which sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of any allegation of abuse or neglect, this is with particular reference to procedures in the individual home. (Regulation 16 (1) (b)	12 February 2010

Recommendations

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

- make sure the guidance for any room searches is clear for staff and understood by children. (NMS 9.8)