

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	14 May 2009
Inspector	Michelle Oxley
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	24 November 2008
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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 short-term respite care for children and young people with a learning disability or combined learning and physical disability. The home operates for five nights each week spanning Wednesday through to Monday morning. Packages of respite care vary in length and frequency. Most children stay for one night at a time but others stay for weekends. Where possible children stay in the room they are familiar with and with children of similar needs and interest. The building is single storey, providing level access. Enclosed play areas are provided outdoors where children receive support to access a range of play equipment.

Summary

The purpose of this unannounced inspection is to assess the home's progress in meeting the actions and recommendations set following the last inspection. It is to assess the home's competence in meeting the standards under staying safe and some key standards under organisation.

The service provides a good standard of care across all the assessed areas with outstanding practice around behaviour management. Further developments are recommended to care planning documents.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection there were two actions set, one regarding the reporting of significant events and one regarding the recording of physical interventions. Both are now met.

As a result of the last inspection three good practice recommendations were made. It was recommended that the home ensures that all temporary and agency staff receive training in child protection. It was also recommended that the time of fire drills be recorded. These two recommendations are met. A third recommendation was made regarding the development of care plans, some work has been carried out in this area but the recommendation is rolled over as further development is recommended.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The staff team take account of young people's privacy and dignity in all aspects of care giving. Young people and staff have an agreement that staff will routinely knock on bedroom doors before they enter. Staff are sensitive to young people's feelings when dealing with a full range of personal care needs. There are general rules around privacy and protection when providing personal care such as ensuring two staff are always in attendance. However in some cases these arrangements lack formality because they are not clarified in writing as part of the young person's placement plan in every case.

There have been no recent complaints at the home. A system is in place to deal with complaints which is accessible to parents and visitors. Accessible information about how to complain for young people has been devised using signs and symbols.

There are systems in place to protect children and promote welfare. The up to date local safeguarding information is available to staff. All staff have recently attended a one day updating in child protection training. Since the last inspection temporary and relief staff have also been involved in this training. A child protection flow chart directs the team in how to pass on any concerns. An introduction to child protection is provided to staff as part of their induction training.

The home has developed positive strategies to prevent bullying from occurring. High staffing levels mean that staff have the opportunity to intervene in any potential situations which may have otherwise led to bullying. The team works with young people to develop positive group relations. Young people have a say in how they would like to be treated by others including peers and staff. A counter bullying policy is in place.

A procedure to deal with absences without authority from the home is in place. To date there have been no unauthorised absences but staff are aware of how to respond if they needed to.

Since the last inspection the team have passed relevant information to other agencies including Ofsted as required.

The team have developed effective methods to manage young people's behaviour in a positive way. The approach is underpinned by a nurturing attitude and a stable staff team which knows young people well. The result is that staff are able to distract or calm a situation before it develops. Physical restraint is very rarely used at the home. On the rare occasion when it is, time is taken to examine the incident and to learn from it. Sanctions are occasionally used at the home, these are consistent with the behaviour displayed. Since the last inspection changes have been made to the restraint log in order to capture all the required information.

Positive steps are taken to ensure that the building is safe. An over all health and safety risk assessment of the building has been carried out. A gas safety check is carried out, fire safety equipment is checked and fire drills are carried out. Since the last inspection the time of these drills has been recorded as recommended following the last inspection.

There is a separate arrangement in place to inspect the councils staff records. A system is in place to monitor visitors to the home.

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.

The management team has been re established and is fully functioning. The home's registered manager has returned from sick leave meaning that the deputy who was acting up can return to her usual role. Staff moral is good across the organisation.

Staffing levels remain high with children receiving one to one care on the evening of inspection. Staffing levels can be adjusted to meet the assessed needs of young people. Waking and sleeping staff are usually on duty at night.

There are ongoing training and development opportunities for staff. An overall training log is in place. Training opportunities include a programme of National Vocational qualifications for all the team, food hygiene, epilepsy awareness, child protection, team teach, and moving and handling. New staff receive an induction.

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
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Recommendations

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

- combine existing care plans in to one over all system, providing practical information relevant to each young person's stay (NMS 2).
- develop care plans to include information about how to deal with each persons personal care needs in relation to privacy and protection (NMS 2)