

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Paul Taylor
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Date of last inspection	02/11/2010
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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 may accommodate up to six young people of either gender and is set in a residential area. It is close to all the main amenities and facilities. The house is a large and spacious detached property with a large rear garden. There are six bedrooms for young people and appropriate bathroom and toilet facilities. There is also a spacious dining room and lounge for communal activities.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

At this unannounced interim inspection the key standards in the area of staying safe were assessed together with how the home has addressed the three actions and one recommendation made at the last inspection.

The home offers a good standard of care and support to the young people. Individuals feel safe living there and feel that the staff provide ample opportunities to discuss issues. Staff awareness ensures that any issues which the young people may have are noticed and effectively addressed.

Two actions and one recommendation which were made at the last inspection have been addressed, as outlined in the improvement section of the report. However, the home has yet to submit an application to Ofsted for an individual to become the Registered Manager and this action therefore continues.

One further action and one recommendation have been made as a result of this inspection. The home has been asked to ensure that the monitoring and recording of key records, such as risk assessments and missing person reports, is maintained consistently.

One recommendation has been made. The home has been asked to include comments from the young people in the records of sanctions.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection three actions were made. Two have been addressed. The system for recording and administering medication is now accurate. Records ensure that medication in stock is subject to an audit process and that any medication administered is also accurately recorded. The home has a central log which records when an incident of physical intervention has occurred and this corresponds to the record kept on the electronic system.

At the last inspection an action was made requiring that an application be made to Ofsted for the acting manager to become the Registered Manager. An individual, who was due to become the manager of the home and also to apply to Ofsted, withdrew before he started employment. This action therefore continues.

At the last inspection, a recommendation was made for the home to review the system for key working sessions with the young people. This was because a significant amount of sessions had been refused by the young people or had been cancelled. The home has a system whereby planned sessions are recorded when they have occurred and good records are maintained of the areas discussed.

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.

Young people's privacy is respected by the staff team and sensitive information is stored securely. Members of staff always knock on bedroom doors before entering and personal issues are discussed in private. Records are made if a room search needs to be carried out and these are checked by the manager.

Information on how to complain is made available to the young people in their handbook and further information is displayed in the dining room. Young people have numerous individuals that they can complain to within the home, such as members of staff, key workers, the manager and operations manager. No complaints have been made since the last inspection.

All members of staff receive child protection training and are up-to-date with child protection procedures. Additionally they have access to local safeguarding procedures and the organisation's child protection policy. This means that they are clear about their obligations in the event that they have concerns about a young person's well-being. Any issues of concern are shared with the relevant agencies.

The home delivers a very clear message to the young people that bullying is not accepted. Young people's meetings address the issue on every occasion to ensure that the message is embedded in the routines and culture of the home. Staff supervision of the group dynamics in the home ensures that any issues or tensions can be addressed either in a house meeting or on an individual basis. Young people report that bullying is not an issue and are confident that the staff will deal with it should they need to.

There is a clear process for the home to follow in the event that a young person is missing. Individual protocols outline each young person's vulnerability and staff

ensure that the police are alerted if it is necessary. Liaison is maintained with a local police officer when there are specific concerns. Young people are aware that they will be reported as missing to the police if they are missing from the home. Recording of missing person reports is not always achieved consistently, there being some discrepancies between the paper records and the electronic records. This, however, does not impinge on the safety of the young people as other records, such as daily logs and incident reports, show that young people have been reported missing to the police and have included the time and circumstances in which they have returned safely to the home.

There are individual behaviour support plans in place which outline what support each young person needs in order to promote positive behaviour. The plans also outline what issues may trigger negative behaviour and what strategies should be used to manage this. Young people are able to earn rewards for positive behaviour and reaching targets which have been agreed with their key workers. Targets include areas such as anger management and being back home on time.

An electronic record is maintained of sanctions imposed. The record has a section to include comments made by the young people about the sanctions, but this has not been achieved. Young people are able to comment on their progress when they see their weekly reports but do not necessarily comment on sanctions imposed.

Good records are maintained when an incident requiring physical intervention occurs. These include a debrief session with the young people so that the incident can be discussed and any learning points taken forward. It is also seen as an opportunity to assess whether the individual behaviour management plan needs to be amended if necessary.

Regular checks of the premises and safety equipment, such as fire alarms, are carried out. Fire drills also occur on a regular basis.

Risk assessments are made with regards to the premises and activities in which the young people partake. They are regularly reviewed and updated on the electronic system operated in the home. It is not always clear which member of staff reviewed and updated the risk assessment. For example, a member of staff on duty saw updated risk assessments which had her name as the member of staff who had reviewed them. She was clear that she had not reviewed those particular risk assessments.

The organisation has a thorough recruitment process which ensures that any prospective member of staff does not start work until all necessary checks have been completed.

The systems operated in the home together with staff awareness ensure good outcomes for the 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?

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
34	ensure that the acting manager applies to Ofsted to become the Registered Manager. (Care Standards Act section 11 (1))	29/04/2011
34	ensure that the monitoring and recording of key records, especially with regards to risk assessments and missing person reports, is achieved consistently. (Regulation 34 (1))	29/04/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure that children are encouraged to write or have their views recorded and sign their names on the sanctions records. (NMS 22.14)