

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	22 March 2010
Inspector	Elaine Cray
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	19 May 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 is managed and run by the local authority. It provides residential care for six young people aged between 10 and 17 years. The aim of the home is to provide physical, emotional and psychological support for young people so that they may return to their birth family, move to foster care, or develop skills to live independently in the community. The home is a large, refurbished detached house, providing spacious communal facilities. Private garden areas are situated to the front and rear of the property. Ground floor accommodation comprises of two lounges, a dining room, a kitchen, and a craft room. The office is situated across a courtyard in a separate building. On the first floor there are six single bedrooms and two bathrooms. Local facilities in the town centre are accessible including shops, parks and clubs.

Summary

This is an unannounced interim inspection. The purpose of the visit is to assess the key standards under the staying safe from the national minimum standards for children's homes .

The home continues to provide a good service to the young people. A judgement of good is made under the outcome area of staying safe. There are effective procedures to keep young people safe and promote their welfare. Young people respond well to firm boundaries, consistent reward and celebration for improved behaviour. Young people are positive about living at the home and they are cared for and safeguarded by staff who are well trained and very proud about the progress made by the young people.

Two actions and one recommendation are made as a result of this visit.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The service was asked to ensure weekly fire checks are conducted and this is addressed, as is the need to carry out managerial checks every month.

The service was also asked to ensure that the significant views, discussions and expressed opinions are recorded promptly. Records in the home clearly reflect the views of young people. Records have also been improved to ensure that the duration of physical interventions are documented.

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 safety and welfare of young people is placed in high priority and young people say they feel safe and understand that bullying is not allowed. Young people present as happy and confident and there are significant improvements in their behaviour and their welfare.

No new staff have been recruited since the last inspection. Previous inspections demonstrate that there are robust procedures in place to ensure that staff are thoroughly checked. Visitors to the home are vetted to promote the safety of young people. Young people are protected by clear procedures and practices for promoting their welfare and safety. Staff are trained in safeguarding children and behaviour management procedures. Staffing levels are allocated to ensure that all young people are kept safe, receive appropriate support and are appropriately supervised. Staff are fully aware of who to notify about serious incidents in the home.

There is a written behaviour management policy. There are good risk assessments and management strategies in place and these link with young people's behaviour management plans. Some young people's behaviour plans, while detailed and comprehensive, are not updated to reflect the behaviour strategies currently used in the home and the subsequent positive outcomes and improvements for young people. Young people are enabled to manage and improve their behaviour by staff who are trained in behaviour management and physical intervention. Staff promote clear boundaries, expectations and there is a clear focus on rewarding positive and improved behaviour. Young people say they are supported to improve their behaviour and enjoy the time they spend with staff. Staff are proud of the improvements and achievements of young people. Records are generally well maintained, but the central records for sanctions and physical intervention do not provide enough detail about what behaviour led up to the action by staff, the effectiveness of the measure or the young people's comments. Sanctions used in the home tend to be financial.

The privacy of young people is respected and young people enjoy their own private space. There is an anti-bullying policy and staff present a good understanding of group dynamics and a clear commitment to improving challenging behaviour. Young people are protected by a clear written complaints procedure. The manager and staff show a good commitment to enabling young people to express their concerns and wishes.

The physical environment is well maintained and monitored in terms of health and safety, with comprehensive and detailed documentation. Fire safety procedures are checked and monitored, but the annual review of the home's fire risk assessment is a month overdue.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young people's views are listened to and their meetings are recorded.

Not all the key standards were assessed at this inspection and therefore the outcome judgement remains the same as at the previous inspection.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The manager carries out monitoring checks on the home on a monthly basis.

Not all the key standards were assessed at this inspection and therefore the outcome judgement remains the same as at the previous inspection.

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
22	ensure the volume used to record of the measures of control, restraint and discipline used in the home covers the matters set out in Regulation 17.4 (Regulation 17)	30 April 2010
26	ensure the home's fire risk assessment is reviewed (Regualtion 32).	30 April 2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure risk assessments, in conjunction with young people's behaviour plans, are regularly reviewed (NMS 26.2).