

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Muhammed Harunur Rashid
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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 service is a home for up to five young people with a learning and/or physical disability. The building is set in large grounds and accommodation is spread over three wings and two floors. Ground floor accommodation comprises of a lounge area, bedrooms, two bathrooms, kitchen, dining room, quiet lounge, soft play area, laundry facilities and offices. The first floor is mainly unused office space, although there is a sensory room and art room which are used by the young people. The home has specialist moving and handling equipment and baths available for young people with physical disabilities.

The home is situated half a mile from the centre of town, which has a range of shops and amenities. A vehicle with wheelchair access is available for young people to access community facilities.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This is a good service with some aspects judged as outstanding. The service provides young people with an appropriate environment with the adaptations and equipment provided to meet individual needs. Young people are cared for by qualified, experienced and knowledgeable staff. Individual needs are appropriately assessed and clarified into planned care arrangements in consultation with parents. Health care needs are supported and healthy eating is encouraged. Safeguarding children arrangements prioritise the protection of young people. Young people are supported to make personal choices and to access community resources.

There are no actions or recommendations as a result of this inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

The service was asked to ensure that there are written explanations of any gaps in staff employment histories. The service was also asked to ensure that low key issues of concern raised by children are addressed; the effectiveness and consequence to sanctions and physical intervention are measured; to update the fire risk assessment and devise a development plan for the service.

The service has acted upon the previous action and recommendations. These steps help to promote and safeguard the welfare of young people.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

There are good arrangements for promoting the healthy lives of young people coming to stay at the home. Young people are encouraged to eat healthy home-cooked meals. Staff promote healthy eating and also support young people to plan and choose the menus. Staff have developed a very good resource of symbols and pictures of different foods and meals so that young people can communicate their needs and choices.

There are good arrangements for promoting the health needs of young people. They are all registered with a local doctor, dentist and optician. Staff accompany young people to medical appointments and maintain records of all appointments they have attended. The home works closely with the local health services which enables young people to get access to these services. This also offers opportunities for staff to get access to various training to develop their knowledge and skills in order to meet young people's complex health care needs.

The home has a medication administration policy and staff administer prescribed medication to young people. Staff have attended safe handling of medication and first aid training. Medication administration record sheets are examined and found to be satisfactory. First aid boxes are provided in the home.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people live in a stable and safe environment. They are provided with single bedroom accommodation. Information regarding young people and staff is kept in a locked cabinet.

An appropriate complaint policy and procedure is in place and the procedure is made accessible by being displayed in the home. Staff maintain a complaint log book. However, the home has not received any formal complaints recently. The Registered Manager advised the inspector that staff are now working towards recording the low key issues of concerns raised by young people.

A comprehensive safeguarding policy and procedure is in place which provides guidance for staff to protect young people. Staff have attended safeguarding training and have awareness of safeguarding issues. The home has an anti-bullying policy. Staff have sound knowledge and skills to deal with bullying if it is suspected. The home has a policy and procedure in place for dealing with unauthorised absence from care. Staff take appropriate action when a young person is suspected of being missing from care.

Staff are provided with guidance and training to improve young people's socially acceptable behaviour. Young people's socially acceptable behaviour is appropriately

rewarded. There are agreed measures by which to deal with unacceptable behaviour, such as the use of appropriate forms of sanctions. Staff have a good knowledge of safeguarding issues and training in the use of restraint is provided. Staff now record the effectiveness and consequence to the measures used.

Staff have attended health and safety in work training. They take appropriate steps to keep young people, visitors and themselves safe from the risk of fire and other hazards. A risk assessment of the premises is in place. The fire risk assessment was updated on 27 July 2010. Staff carry out regular fire alarm testing and fire drills. Current gas and electric test certificates are available for inspection.

Staff are recruited according to the policy of the county council which ensures that young people are protected. The human resources department ensures that all necessary documents including enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure certificates are obtained prior to the appointment of staff. The Registered Manager has obtained records of all staff's employment history which includes written explanation of any gaps in their employment.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Staff are positive in their approach to education and its value for young people. Staff work in partnership with the adjacent school to ensure consistency of practice and to enhance the quality of care provided. This may include observing practice in schools, attending review meetings and liaising with teachers. Young people have individual personal education plan setting out a record of their educational achievements, needs and aspirations. Young people are provided with facilities that are conducive to study. Staff monitor young people's attendance at schools.

Young people are given individualised support in line with their needs and wishes. Staff are able to communicate with young people who are non-verbal or have a very limited vocabulary through various communication methods. Young people can approach any member of staff including the Registered Manager and their concerns are listened to. Young people have access to advocacy services. Staff develop an individual risk assessment for each young person and a strategy is in place to eliminate or reduce the identified risk factors.

The service places a high value on providing leisure activities within the home where young people can experience new opportunities within a safe environment. Days trips are also arranged after consultations with young people during the school vacations and weekend. Young people have opportunities to celebrate their birthdays, Christmas and other religious festivals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Young people's care needs are effectively and comprehensively assessed. Each young person has an individual care plan in place. Care plans are comprehensively written. Guidelines are in place about individual aspects of care for each young person; this ensures that staff have a consistent approach in providing care. Staff complete daily records which include information about individual care and support given to a young person. Designated key workers monitor these care plans to ensure that these are implemented on a day-to-day basis.

Young people are encouraged to get involved in their review process. Evidence shows that statutory reviews take place on time. Staff attend young people's review meetings and contribute accordingly.

Staff work closely with families, the school and other professionals involved with each young person; this helps to provide best outcomes for young people. Staff encourage young people's family members to visit the home. Staff have good relationships with parents and listen to their concerns.

There are appropriate procedures in place for introducing young people to the home. Young people are given opportunities to make tea visits. This enables staff to assess young people's needs within the home environment. There are procedures for young people leaving the home covering both planned and emergency departures. Young people are supported to express and cope with their feelings about being away from home. The young person's guide provides information about the service on offer.

Staff use various communication methods to seek views of young people who are non-verbal or have very limited vocabularies. Evidence shows that they and their family members are also consulted regularly to improve the service they offer. Information regarding access to independent advocacy services is provided.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Staff encourage and support young people to develop independent living skills. Staff support them to look after their personal space. Young people have opportunities to be involved in house shopping and making snacks at home. Staff support young people to develop numeracy and literacy skills.

The home's location, design and size are in keeping with its purpose and function. The home serves the needs of young people. The premises are wheelchair accessible and have specialist facilities for disabled young people, for example, there is suitable bath and electronic equipment hoist in place. There is a soft playroom and a sensory room available for young people. The home employs a handy person and all maintenances works are carried out as and when required.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The home has a Statement of Purpose. This includes all the required information, such as the aims and objectives of the service. The young people's guide provides information regarding the facilities available to them.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Evidence supports a consistent commitment to improving equality and diversity in practice. Young people receive an individualised service in the home which is designed to meet their personal needs. Staff have attended equality and diversity training. Staff have a good understanding of young people's dietary, religious and cultural needs. Staff support young people to make personal choices and to access community resources.

There are systems in place to monitor the performance of the home against the Statement of Purpose. The senior managers of the service conduct the visits in accordance with Regulation 33. The Registered Manager monitors and signs the home's records and the home takes appropriate steps on issues requiring action. The Registered Manager has devised a development plan for the service.

Appropriate staffing arrangements are in place to meet young people's assessed needs. Young people are supported by the qualified, experienced and knowledgeable staff. The Registered Manager reviews staffing levels in accordance with the assessed needs of young people. Rotas show there is a gender balance of staff whenever this is possible. The general competence and experience of staff helps them to work with young people who have complex needs.

The Registered Manager is well qualified and has several years of working experience in child care settings. The Registered Manager is available for both staff and young people for support and advice. The two team leaders have completed National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at level 4 in care.

All staff receive regular supervision and annual appraisals from their line manager. Regular staff meetings take place which promote good communication amongst the staff team.

Staff receive various training for their professional development, such as health and safety, medication administration, first aid, food hygiene, managing behaviour, safeguarding and moving and handling. All staff have completed their NVQ at Level 3 in the Caring for Children and Young People.

Each young person has a permanent private and secure record of their history, development and progress throughout their childhood.