

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	30 March 2010
Inspector	Mary Timms
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	22 July 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 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

This was an unannounced interim inspection. The visit was planned to review the progress the provider has made with two actions set on the previous inspection. The visit also assessed the care provided to children against key national minimum standards under the staying safe outcome area.

The judgements and reporting on this inspection are supported by evidence from the full key inspection undertaken in July 2009 and are unchanged on this interim visit. Judgements will be reviewed on the next full inspection. The service continues to provide good safeguarding arrangements. However, there are areas of record keeping which sometimes fail to evidence in all areas how the service fully safeguards children. As this is an interim inspection, there is some further limited reporting under being organisation.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The Registered Manager has taken action to improve the frequency of one-to-one staff supervision meetings. Whilst there are still some gaps in the delivery of monthly supervision, these relate to times when children are present in the building and staff time has been redirected, or are due to staff absence.

The Registered Manager has taken action to identify areas of service development and is working towards areas of improvement and change. However, a formal development plan has not yet been produced. A further recommendation has been set.

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 service continues to provide good care arrangements which support children to stay safe.

Children are protected by the staff recruitment procedures, including checks with the Criminal Record's Bureau, checks of identity and obtaining references. However, records maintained in the home do not always clarify the action taken to look into gaps in an employment history, as required by children's homes regulations. Manager's undertake 'safer recruitment training'. Staff training is provided in relation to safeguarding children and behaviour management, including the use of physical holds.

Children's privacy is respected. Placement planning documents set out clear guidance for staff in relation to the provision of personal care whilst supporting children's preferences and their right to privacy. The provision of personal care is informed by appropriate policies and procedures. Staff follow good practice when supporting children with intimate personal care. Bathroom doors are not locked, unless children manage this themselves. Staff describe how they use a 'traffic light system to ensure that other staff and children know the bathroom is in use, so that we do not have to lock ourselves in with children'.

Children are protected from being able to leave the building without staff supervision. The premises and grounds are also surrounded by a high level fence. Children are safeguarded by the fire safety arrangements. A senior member of staff has delegated responsibility for fire safety arrangements. Fire alarms and emergency lighting are tested on a weekly basis. Fire evacuation drills are undertaken during the day and a fire drill scenario is facilitated in relation to night-time arrangements. The fire safety risk assessment is more than 12 months old. The document does not reflect the use of scenario evacuation drills for night-time periods, necessary to clarify that this practice is the best arrangement to protect children.

The service has complaints policies and procedures which are made known to families when children are first admitted to the service. No complaints have been made about the service since the last inspection. Staff know and understand children's behaviour in the context of their disabilities, children are monitored for changes in behaviour which may be showing that they are concerned or unhappy. Staff confirm that 'we always respond promptly if children raise a concern'. However, a central record is not kept to demonstrate how the service responds to any concerns children raise about day-to-day care arrangements.

Behaviour is well managed. Placement plans set out detailed behaviour management strategies and guide staff to take a consistent approach with challenging behaviours. Staff are aware of the potential for children to become distressed at the behaviour of others and take action to engage children in separate activities. Sanctions are used sparingly and physical intervention is used only for safeguarding reasons. Detailed records are maintained of the circumstances leading to the use of a measure of control. However, some areas of recording fail to provide the full details of the effectiveness and consequence to the use of the measure, as required by national minimum standards.

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.

Staff members are supported in their role; they receive regular one-to-one supervision meetings.

The Registered Manager identifies areas of service development and is working towards areas of improvement and change. However, a formal development plan has not yet been produced as guided by national minimum standards.

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
27	ensure that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to each member of staff in respect of the matters set out in schedule 2. In particular, on this occasion, this relates to the need to keep a satisfactory written explanation of any gaps in employment. (Regulation 26.3d)	14 May 2010

Recommendations

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

- maintain a written record of the person making the complaint, date of the complaint, nature of the complaint, action taken and outcome of the complaint. In particular, on this occasion, this relates to the need to record the more low key issues of concern raised by children and evidence how the concern is addressed (NMS 16.3)
- maintain a record of any sanction and also the use of physical intervention. In particular, on this occasion, this relates to the need to include within records the effectiveness and consequence to the measure used (NMS 22.9 and 22.10)
- ensure that risk assessments estimating level of risk to health, safety or welfare are carried out and regularly reviewed. In particular, on this occasion, this relates to the need to review annually and update where necessary the home's fire safety risk assessment (NMS 26.2)
- ensure that there is a written development plan for the service, which is reviewed annually. (NMS 33.5)