

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC043972
Inspection date	24 February 2010
Inspector	Michael McCleave
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	11 November 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 situated in a residential area and accommodates up to four young people between the ages of 11 and 17 years. The home is close to a park, education and leisure facilities. There are also convenient rail and road links into the city centre.

Accommodation is on three floors. The ground floor has the kitchen, dining room, living room and the office. The first floor has two bathrooms and three bedrooms, one of which is the staff sleep in room. On the second floor there are two more bedrooms and a bathroom. In addition, there is a living area with kitchenette on the second floor which is intended to be used for young people preparing for independence.

Summary

This interim inspection looked at the progress the home has made with the recommendation made at the last inspection. This related to improvements to ensure that educational provision was in place for young people not in full time education. The manager has taken appropriate steps to resolve the previous recommendation. Being healthy, positive contribution, economic wellbeing and organisation were not looked at during this inspection.

Staff have a positive approach to privacy and confidentiality at the home. There is a clear understanding of their responsibilities to keep the young people safe. Young people are able to express their views informally should they have any concerns. Safeguarding is a high priority and staff know how to invoke the procedures if any allegation or suspicion of abuse is evident. There are effective systems in place to ensure the safety of the young people. All staff are trained in child protection awareness, and they have also completed behaviour management training. Staff take their responsibilities seriously in respect of the safety of the young people and thorough checks are completed before employees commence their duties at the home.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The manager was asked to ensure that educational resources are in place for those young people not in full time education. The manager has taken steps to comply with the recommendation.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The staff are fully aware of the importance of ensuring that the young are able to have their privacy respected. Information about the young people is kept secure in the office and staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities to ensure that their work with the young people is maintained in a confidential manner.

Young people are aware of how to make a complaint, although the common approach is for any issues or concerns to be dealt with informally by staff. Where the formal procedure is used, the complaint is investigated by a manager and completed within 28 days. A written response is given to the young person outlining how the complaint was investigated and the outcome. This is good practice.

Safeguarding of the young people is a high priority at the home and all staff have been trained in child protection awareness. Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities to ensure that the young people are kept safe from harm. Staff are proficient in carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities and are confident that the appropriate procedures would be initiated if there were any concerns of abuse taking place. This promotes the safety of the young people at the home.

It is acknowledged by staff that bullying can take place and staff will engage in discussion with the perpetrator and the victim to resolve the problem rather than resort to sanctions. This is good practice. The home has an anti-bullying policy and procedure in place. Young people do not regard bullying as a current issue at the home.

When young people go absent without authority staff are familiar with the procedure to follow. On their return the approach taken by staff is to ensure that the young person is welcomed back and made to feel comfortable. The reason for their absence is conducted sensitively at the young person's own pace.

Staff have developed good relationships with the young people and some commented that 'staff here are ok they look after us well'. Therefore, although their behaviour can be challenging, staff use positive encouragement to de-escalate difficult situations. The behaviour of the young people is influenced through this less confrontational approach. In addition staff work on establishing the trust and respect of the young people.

There are good safe working practices at the home and appropriate up-to-date risk assessments are in place. The home operates an efficient monitoring system to ensure that all safety risk assessment checks are carried out weekly. This is very good practice and promotes the safety of the young people.

The recruitment of staff to the home involves thorough checks being completed before anyone commences work with the young people. The manager is responsible for assessing all references, and the company human resources section ensures that any gaps in employment history are fully checked. All candidates for employment are invited to visit the home to meet staff and the children. This enhances the recruitment process and promotes the involvement of the young people.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Enjoying and achieving was not inspected as a key inspection outcome. Only the recommendation relating to educational provision from the last inspection was looked at.

All the young people living at the home have been allocated full time school placements. There is a system in place that ensures young people will receive education at the home during school hours if they are excluded from mainstream school. The approach to education at the home is

one of positive encouragement for young people to achieve their potential. Staff liaise with teachers to ensure that young people from the home are not disadvantaged. Where required, the company school will offer support in providing school work for the young person when they are out of school for whatever reason. Staff are proactive in ensuring that young people are able to take advantage of the support available in the local community and from the internet.

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 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

There are no recommendations.