

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC044231
Inspection date	4 March 2010
Inspector	Elaine Clare
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	15 October 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

This service offers a home to four children with learning disabilities. The home is registered for both genders. At the time of this inspection, males occupied all four places. The home is a detached property standing in its own grounds. There is an enclosed rear garden. Premises are suitably adapted to support the children's needs.

The home is situated approximately three miles from a nearby city centre. The home has a vehicle and is close to bus routes that connect it with the local community and rail links. The home has space and rooms for children to pursue their leisure interests and hobbies. Shops and supermarkets are accessible within the surrounding community.

The organisation responsible for the home is Progress Care and Education Ltd who operate an independent 52 week residential school. It is co-educational and caters for pupils and students between the ages of seven and 19 years. The school has 17 residential places with accommodation provided in three separate houses within the area. These properties are registered as children's homes. The organisation's policy is for houses to be detached properties located in suburban residential areas.

Summary

This unannounced interim inspection was the second visit to the home for the year April 2009 to March 2010. The service was judged as good at the key inspection, undertaken in October 2009: the aim of this inspection was to inspect those standards that ensure the young people are safe and to inspect the progress made in implementing the actions and recommendations previously made. The visit provided the opportunity to meet with the manager, some of the young people and the care staff.

The staff are proactive in ensuring the young people are kept safe and always reflect on the strategies in place to ensure they continue to meet each young person's individual needs; their wellbeing is at the heart of how the home is run.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Two recommendations were issued at the last inspection, both of which have been implemented. This is resulting in key workers being assigned to young people and the home has provided more opportunities to celebrate the cultural differences within today's society.

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 young people's privacy is respected and confidentiality is maintained. Information about the young people is stored safely in the staff office and they know how to deal with information in confidence. Entering of bedrooms continues to be underpinned by comprehensive procedural

guidance. Each young person has a lockable, single room and if they prefer, can have their own key to maintain their privacy. The staff understand the need to knock before entering bedrooms, to respect each other's space. Wherever possible a mixed staff team is rostered to be on duty, enabling sensitivity to gender issues.

All concerns and complaints are taken seriously, well recorded and investigated. Details of the complaints procedure are well publicised for the young people. Formal complaints continue to be well managed through the registered manager. Similarly, the staff believe all incidental concerns displayed by the young people must be listened to and acted upon; the outcome of any action taken is discussed and used to inform future practice. Good monitoring continues through the home's quality assurance, enabling trends and themes to be identified.

The staff respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns and robust policies underpin the home's procedures. The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures are also readily available for staff to reference. Staff recruitment includes an enhanced Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) disclosure prior to employment and staff training in safeguarding is mandatory. In the event of any safeguarding concerns, the staff know the procedures to follow and an 'on call' rota of senior managers provides additional support.

The staff are alert as to what constitutes bullying and respond appropriately. They promote that bullying is unacceptable and remain diligent in following through any incident with the individuals concerned. Staff meetings are a forum for regular discussions about bullying; these enable reflection on practice and for new strategies to be explored, to meet each young person's needs. Details of who the young people can go to for support if they feel intimidated are well publicised.

Clear strategies by the home ensure the staff would be responsive to absence without authority. This has not occurred as young people are on a high staff to child ratio.

The staff promote socially acceptable behaviour within the home but also respond constructively when the young people demonstrate inappropriate behaviour. The reward system continues to be used to endorse good behaviour. These measures are resulting in a reduction of incidence of physical interventions; a log promotes comprehensive records of such events. Both behaviour management logs are included in the home's quality assurance monitoring and the staff are well trained in behaviour management techniques.

Good measures continue, to maintain the safety and security of the young people. The required checks of equipment are undertaken and the necessary contracts remain in place. Positive steps are taken to protect against the risk of fire and other hazards. The staff and young people continue to be involved in fire drills.

Visitors are well vetted and the manager is fully aware of the measures that must be in place for the safe recruitment of staff. Staff files are held by the organisation's personnel department and the manager continues to oversee the recruitment of new staff. There have been two staff recruited since the last inspection, files held in the home demonstrate that suitable checks have been completed.

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 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.