

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Debbi Flint
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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 is a four bedroom children's home. The home is actually two adjacent bungalows affording young people a high degree of privacy. The home is located in a residential area with a range of shops and amenities nearby. There is provision for staff to sleep in both bungalows. The organisation provides its own education at a school in a nearby town.

Summary

At this unannounced full inspection all key standards were inspected. The outstanding recommendations made at the previous inspection were followed up.

This home has an experienced staff team which provides the young people with firm boundaries, good guidance and support. The promotion of equality and diversity is good throughout the standards inspected. Staff demonstrate a very good knowledge of each young person's individual needs and are also mindful of young people's privacy. Young people's educational needs are very well promoted by staff.

Four recommendations were made at this inspection

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the home has replaced, as recommended, one window at the front of the property. Staff have also ensured that any incidents of physical intervention are recorded within 24 hours.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Young people state that they plan their meals on a weekly basis and also go shopping for the home's provisions. All young people prepare and cook meals on at least one occasion during the week. Any young people who particularly like cooking are able to carry out this activity more frequently. There are a wide variety of cookery books in the home's kitchen. These include Caribbean and vegetarian recipes. The home also caters for any special dietary requirements such as Muslim. Menus are healthy and well balanced except for 'blow the rules' nights. These occur once a month and on these occasions young people are able to eat whatever they want regardless of a food's nutritional value. Staff state that this privilege reflects normal life. Young people eat out with staff in various restaurants on a monthly basis to enable them to develop their social skills.

Young people are registered with a local doctor, dentist and optician. All medical appointments are recorded on individual care files. There are comprehensive health plans on file for each young person. Staff promote good health and ensure that young people are educated in the dangers of smoking and substance abuse. The home has a no smoking policy which staff enforce. Literature which provides guidance and advice on sexual health is also kept in the home. Staff promote the importance of regular physical exercise and young people state that they enjoy playing badminton and going to the gym. All staff receive training in the administration of

medication. Medication records are accurate and there are clear records of medication audits. Medication is kept in a locked safe in a cupboard in the office.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff are aware of the need to protect privacy and young people are in control of their own private spaces. Young people state that their rooms are places where they can 'relax and chill out'. There is a digital cordless phone which young people can use for personal calls. Emergency help line phone numbers are displayed in the lounge. Bathroom doors can be locked to ensure privacy but there is a facility whereby they can be opened in the event of an emergency.

There are good procedures in place to safeguard the young people. Young people confirm that they know how to make a complaint. There have been no complaints since the last inspection. A bound log is kept in the home for the purpose of recording any complaints. Staff receive annual safeguarding training and also have access to a copy of the local safeguarding board's procedures which is kept in the home. The home has an anti bullying policy. Young people state that they get on well together and they do not report any bullying. The home has an absence without authority policy. An absconding action form is also displayed on the home's notice board in the office. There has been one incident of absconding since the last inspection and appropriate procedures were followed.

Staff state that they manage behaviour through the use of positive reinforcement and a consequential environment. Rewards given are specific to the requests of each individual young person. Staff state that they manage behaviour consistently and use de escalation techniques. Young people demonstrate socially acceptable behaviour. The home keeps a bound book for the purpose of recording any incidents of physical intervention. All incidents are accurately recorded within 24 hours of the event. The home keeps a log for the purpose of recording any sanctions that may occur. There have been three sanctions since the last inspection.

The home has a fire risk assessment. Fire extinguishers have been serviced recently and all fire alarms are tested on a two weekly basis. The home has recently carried out a fire drill but prior to this there had not been a fire drill for nine months. The home's portable appliances are tested on an annual basis. There are comprehensive individual risk assessments on file for each young person. The home has rigorous procedures in place for the selection and vetting of staff. Young people are involved in the staff recruitment process.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Young people can access external support if required. Young people state that they like the organisation's staff and feel well supported.

Staff are pro active in promoting education and they maintain good relationships with educational staff. Young people attend the organisation's school and are progressing well with their education. Young people are enthusiastic about their education and have clear ideas about what they may like to do in the future. Personal Education Plans are on each young person's file. The home also keeps monthly school reports on file.

A wide variety of outdoor activities are on offer to the young people and these include badminton, gym, theme parks, ice skating, swimming, walking, cinema and the beach. The organisation has a caravan in a seaside resort which young people can use for holidays. Indoor activities include art work, card games and board games. There is a trampoline in the home's garden. Young people regularly eat out in local restaurants to enable them to develop their social skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The home has an admission's policy for planned and non planned admissions. There are comprehensive care plans on file for each young person. Young people state that they like their rooms and clearly take pride in them. They state that they like the staff and are clear who to approach in the event of any complaint. Young people's care is reviewed according to statutory requirements although notes from one review are not currently on file. Staff also review care plans on a monthly basis. There are contact plans on file and all contact is recorded. Staff are pro active in both promoting and supporting contact.

Young people confirm that they are consulted in the running of the home in a variety of ways. They participate in the home's recruitment process and feel in charge of their own private spaces.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The home is situated in a residential area and is comprised of two adjacent bungalows. It is a short distance from a seaside resort where there are shopping and leisure facilities. The home is reasonably well maintained with the exception of the ceiling of one shower room which has some damp patches. There are two lounges which contain two televisions, two DVDs and a games console. The kitchens are compact and well presented. Young people take pride in their rooms and these are tidy and contain many personal items. There are two gardens which contain a trampoline and garden furniture.

Staff encourage young people to develop their life skills and there are skills assessments on file for all young people. Young people also have Pathway Plans where appropriate. The home has a daily chores rota and young people participate in cleaning, washing laundry, shopping and cooking. Some young people have weekend jobs and others are currently undergoing work experience.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The home has a Statement of Purpose which accurately reflects what the home sets out to do for the young people it accommodates. There is a user friendly young person's guide which contains good information on the rules and details of how to make a complaint. This is currently in the process of being revised.

The home has a team of six staff in addition to the registered manager. The registered manager is currently taking extended leave and Ofsted have been informed of this in writing. The staffing ratio is currently four staff to three young people. Staff state that they feel very well supported, although there is not currently a written record of supervisions in the home, and that they

receive very good training. The organisation has a comprehensive induction programme which consists of 11 modules and includes behaviour management, first aid, non violent crisis intervention, health and safety, child protection and food hygiene training. There are currently 75% of staff either with or about to complete National Vocational Qualification Level 3 and this is just marginally below target.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Evidence supports a good commitment to equality and diversity in practice. Young people's individual needs are well met and young people feel involved in the running of the home.

Two of the organisation's senior managers carry out monthly monitoring visits which are recorded. Schedule 6 monitoring is currently completed on a monthly basis by the organisation's area manager.

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

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

- ensure that at least four fire drills take place in a 12 month period (NMS 26.8)
- ensure that the results of all statutory reviews are recorded on each young person's file (NMS 3.4)
- ensure that damp on the ceiling of one shower room is investigated (NMS 24.3)
- ensure that a written record is kept in the home detailing the time and date and length of each supervision held for each member of staff (NMS 28.3)