

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Helen Lee
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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

This children's home is for two young people and sets out to offer high quality care in a stable and safe environment. The aim is to achieve this by providing an ambience where interpersonal relationships are based on mutual respect and understanding.

The home aims to offer a flexible range of living experiences that are sensitive to individual needs and acknowledge age, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and national and ethnic origin.

The staff team are committed to providing an environment which facilitates the young people's growth, maturation, self-respect, acceptance of responsibility and development of age appropriate skills and behaviour. This is within the context of the need to provide young people with positive adult role models, guidance and boundaries and achieve within a manner that respects their rights, individuality and dignity.

Two young people currently live in the home. Neither young person was present during this inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

This is a satisfactory service, with many good features.

This unannounced interim inspection looked at the outcome area of staying safe and the progress the setting has made with the requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection in June 2010. The home demonstrates that care is in place for each individual young person. Young people's welfare is enhanced by the good relationships that exist between staff and young people. However, staff recruitment practices are not robust and information on staff members' previous working histories does not meet requirements. Record keeping is not always done well, such as self-administered medication in the home and there are some gaps in information regarding training for staff.

This is a well kept home that staff make homely and keep clean. Space restrictions in the home mean that a communal room is also used as a staff sleep-in room and this is restrictive. Young people's health needs are well met through measures such as healthy food provision, good opportunities for exercise and staff having a clear understanding of young people's health needs. Staff help to keep young people safe by making sure that privacy is respected, complaints are treated seriously and all

new staff undergo recruitment checks. Safety checks carried out within the building also ensure that young people are safe.

Three new recommendations were made at this inspection, one regarding providing the home with a written procedure to include the right to make complaints to Ofsted and to include the contact details, as both the staff summary policy sheet and the children's information sheet did not include this information. To include in the countering bullying policy a definition of bullying, which is reviewed frequently with staff and children, measures to prevent bullying and to respond to observed or reported bullying and training for staff. Additionally a recommendation was made for the home to carry out recorded risk assessments of the times, places and circumstances in which the risk of bullying is greatest.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the home was rated satisfactory and six requirements were made. Three have been met and one has been partially met. The registered provider was asked to ensure that a written record is made of any complaint made to the home and incorrect information about making a complaint to the National Care Standards Commission is removed from the young people's notice board. The home had undertaken this and complaints were viewed in the home's complaint book and the notice board had been temporarily emptied to allow for some redecoration. The registered person was also asked to ensure that adequate precautions are taken against the risk of fire, including making adequate arrangements for the maintenance of all fire equipment and for reviewing fire precautions and finally that there is an up to date certificate in the home detailing that the gas installation has been safety checked. Positive action has now been taken in relation to these requirements and young people and staff now benefit from robust health and safety checks on the environment.

The partially met requirement was in relation to new staff members training, induction and overall staff training records. The home has ensured an improvement in the recording of staff training, however, there are still shortfalls. New staff undergo a very thorough induction programme in the first six months of their employment, which includes the completion of child protection and medical training before they start work. However, no records are in place detailing that they have been introduced to the fire training before they start work and consequently staff were not clear on the home's fire extinguishing procedures.

Two requirements are reissued at this inspection. Firstly regarding making suitable arrangements for the recording of any medicines. There are generally good arrangements for ensuring the well-being of young people who take medication, including staff training in the safe handling of medication, safe storage and monitoring of stocks held. However, records held do not fully reflect the full amount of medication held in the home, or medication which is being self-administered. These shortfalls are noted to be errors in recording. Secondly the registered provider was asked to ensure that there is a written explanation of any gaps in the employment history of new employees. However, records are not maintained in

relation to gaps in employment history nor in relation to verifying any previous positions where the work was with young people or vulnerable adults.

Additionally two recommendations were made at the last inspection. No corrective action has been taken in relation to staff not having a separate sleep-in room from the communal area. It remains that staff sleep-in accommodation forms part of the communal area of the home. Young people and staff therefore remain at a disadvantage in terms of space and enjoying a homely environment. Staff have, however, made good efforts to ensure that young people enjoy homely accommodation that is decorated, furnished and maintained to a good standard and additionally the Registered Manager states that a plan for a conversion of the garage awaits approval. The home has made improvements to ensure that records are kept of the fridge and freezer temperatures on a regular basis, this is in fact now achieved daily and monitored at staff handovers.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The home promotes the rights of young people by ensuring that their privacy is respected and information is confidentially handled. Young people's records are appropriately stored. Staff members await invitation before entering young people's bedrooms and they are particularly sensitive at times of washing and ensuring the self-administration of intimate medication. Young people feel comfortable in raising any concerns. Clear policies and procedures are established for dealing with complaints. Staff support young people to raise any issues of concern openly and the process of making a complaint is clearly understood by them. The home has recorded two complaints from the young people since the last inspection and these have been subject to monitoring by the registered person. Young people are given information about how to make a complaint in the young people's guide. However, the written procedure does not include the right to make complaints to Ofsted or Ofsted's contact details.

Young people live in a safe environment where their welfare is promoted and they are protected from abuse, with clear safeguarding processes and procedures. All staff receive training, supervision and guidance to cover safeguarding training. Staff take prompt action to deal with any incidents of bullying, and policies and procedures ensure the young people are protected. However, the home has not carried out recorded risk assessments of the times, places and circumstances in which the risk of bullying is greatest. Incidents of absence without authority are taken seriously by everyone in the home. When young people are absent from the home without permission, the staff deploy effective measures to search, report and return the

young people to the home. This includes spending time with young people discussing the reasons why they failed to return to the home.

Young people are supported to develop socially acceptable behaviour and staff respond constructively to inappropriate behaviour. Sanctions are used appropriately and physical restraint is used sparingly and as a last resort to prevent likely injury. There are clear policies and procedures in place which ensure that staff are aware of their roles in supporting young people. Training is provided in positive behaviour management.

There are satisfactory arrangements for health and safety in the home with measures in place to safeguard young people and staff from the risk of fire. Regular checks and drills are completed to reduce any risks from fire hazards. These include regular tests of the smoke alarms and equipment. However, some staff lack awareness of fire extinguishing procedures and the lack of fire training does not fully promote young people's well-being. In-house safety checks have been updated and the monitoring of the fridge and freezer temperatures is now undertaken daily.

Young people are, in the main, well protected from harm through the home's staff recruitment policies and procedures. The staff personnel files mainly contain all the required information. However, the system is not yet robust. The file for one of the newest members of staff does not contain a full employment history, with a written explanation of any gaps, or verification of the reason why employment had ended, when working with children or vulnerable adults. Another file also had gaps in employment history.

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/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Std.	Action	Due date
27	obtain for all staff, whom are working at the home, all the information set out in Regulation 26, in particular full employment histories and verifications of why employment ended regarding work with children and vulnerable adults (Regulation 26)	30/04/2011
27	obtain for all staff, before they start work at the home, all the information set out in Regulation 26 (Regulation 26)	06/04/2011
31	ensure that new staff members have been introduced to fire training before they start work and records are in place to indicate this, also, ensure that that there is a written record of all staff training maintained in the home (Regulation 27 (4)(a))	29/04/2011
13	ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for the recording of any medicines. (Regulation 21 (1))	11/04/2011

Recommendations

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

- provide the home with a written procedure to include the right to make complaints to Ofsted and to include the contact details of Ofsted (NMS 16.5)
- include in the countering bullying policy a definition of bullying, which is reviewed frequently with staff and children, measures to prevent bullying and to respond to observed or reported bullying and training for staff (NMS 18.2)
- carry out recorded risk assessments of the times, places and circumstances in which the risk of bullying is greatest (NMS 18.5)
- ensure that staff sleep-in rooms do not form part of the communal living area. (NMS 24)