

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspection date	18/01/2011
Inspector	Jacqui Gosling
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	19/03/2010
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You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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

The home provides care for four young people between the ages of 10 and 17 years with emotional and behavioural difficulties or learning disabilities. The home provides medium to long-term residential care and is run by the local authority. One of the beds can be used for emergency admissions. Currently, three young people are living here.

The home is located in a residential area and has access to local facilities and public transport. There are four single bedrooms with en-suite toilet and shower facilities or an adjacent bathroom. There is a large lounge, a second lounge, an activities room, kitchen, and dining room. The gardens are landscaped and there is car parking to the front and side of the house.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This unannounced random inspection concentrated on key national minimum standards under the Every Child Matters area of staying safe. One young person contributed their views of living at the home to the inspection.

This inspection confirms that this home continues to be well managed and young people benefit from living in an environment that is centred on meeting their individual needs. The home has well established systems in place for the assessment of risk and staff take all reasonable precautions to ensure that young people, staff and visitors are safe at all times.

Two good practice recommendations have been made during this inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

No actions or recommendations were made during the last inspection that took place in March 2010.

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.

Information held on behalf of all young people is correctly stored. Staff are aware of their responsibilities to promote privacy and confidentiality and describe practices that are consistent with the home's guidance. The facilities and arrangements for showering and bathing ensure the young people have their privacy respected. Room searches are undertaken only when there are clear grounds. However, the current system for recording these searches, does not allow young people to sign the record if they are present. The home also does not keep a log of all room searches. Therefore, when young people leave the home there is no record for external inspection purposes.

The welfare of young people is promoted by a clear complaints policy, including access to advocates. There is an effective system in place to record any concerns made known by young people, and they are provided with clear information about what action they should take and who they can speak to if they need to make a complaint. Young people say they are 'aware of how to make a complaint'.

The welfare of young people is protected as staff receive training in child protection and they are very knowledgeable about what action they should take if they are concerned about any young people. Young people say they feel 'safe living here'.

Young people are protected from bullying by others. Staff are proactive in creating a culture within the home where bullying is challenged. They make sure that young people understand that bullying behaviour is not tolerated and they talk to young people about the impact of bullying.

The home has good procedures and clear protocols in place regarding liaising with the Police, family members and other agencies to manage and to promote the protection to young people if they are absent without consent and ensure their safe return to the home.

Young people are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff responses to inappropriate behaviour. Behaviour management policies and strategies have as their prime objective the creation of a safe, supportive environment. Young people comment 'staff helped me change my life around, they listen and help me with my behaviour'. Measures of control when used are appropriate to the developmental age and understanding of the young people.

Staff have completed the required training to ensure when physical intervention is necessary it is consistent with guidance. Staff appear comfortable with their role and they clearly understand the need for boundaries while maintaining a good relationship between themselves and the young people. There is positive interaction between the staff and the young people

Young people live in a home that provides for their physical safety and security. There are risk assessments for all aspects of the safety of the premises and grounds, the behaviour of the young people and their activities, which are updated as required.

The records kept in the home show that safe procedures are in place to protect young people from fire. There are records to show that the fire systems are tested. Staff and young people undertake fire drills as required. However, no night time drill has been undertaken in the last 12 months. Relevant certificates show that regular servicing and maintenance is completed on all gas and electrical equipment.

Staff recruitment procedures are appropriate and ensure that all staff are properly vetted before they start work. All visitors to the home are monitored and asked to sign the visitor's book. This good practice ensures young people live in a safe environment.

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?

Recommendations

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

- ensure all room search records are signed by all those present, specifically young people and the records are available for external inspection (national minimum standard 9.8)
- ensure at least one fire drill including evacuation, held at night, takes place in a 12 month period. (national minimum standard 26.8)