

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	22 March 2010
Inspector	Sonya Robinson
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	3 August 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 provides residential accommodation for up to five looked after young people, all with complex needs. They provide care for both genders between the ages of 12 and 17 years.

The premises are large and spacious, providing homely accommodation for the young people accommodated. On the ground floor, there are two lounges which are linked by connecting doors, a kitchen and dining area, staff office, utility area and staff toilet. Children's bedrooms are all single and are located on the first floor; on this floor there are also two bathrooms for use by young people. There is an outside area to the rear of the property that is large enough for play and parking facilities are to the front of the property.

The home is close to local shops, transport links and community resources.

Summary

This visit was an interim inspection and was unannounced. One outcome area for young people was fully looked at during this inspection, which was staying safe. Further issues were also looked at under being healthy and organisation as a follow-up from the previous inspection. There is a reference to care planning documentation for young people under positive contribution. This inspection looked at the progress that the home has made with the actions and recommendations made at the last inspection. These related to documentation for young people and organisational issues.

The home continues to be a satisfactory service that meets most of the national minimum standards. The staff place emphasis on young people's needs and supporting young people with their daily lives.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the Registered Manager was asked to ensure that there are suitable arrangements in place regarding medication and that all staff receive training with regards to physical intervention. These have been mainly completed, although some staff missed the training. Another recommendation is made through this report that those staff undertake this training.

The Registered Manager was also asked to consider, as a matter of good practice, to ensure that staff have undertaken first aid training and that staff files contain all necessary information to safeguard young people. Both of these areas have improved since the last inspection.

Additionally the provider was asked to ensure that monthly audits undertaken by the representative of the home are maintained by the home and the recommendations made are acted upon. They were also asked that there is a written development plan, reviewed annually, for the future of the home. Monthly visits and reports have been undertaken on behalf of the provider, however they do not always reflect the opinions of parents, relatives, staff and young people in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home. The Registered

Manager of the home has completed a development plan to assess how the home is achieving the targets that they have set out to achieve in the forthcoming year.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The home manages young people's medication safely. Staff make sure that young people only have medication specifically prescribed for them and take it in-line with the prescription instructions. Medication is securely stored in a suitable cupboard. Staff keep detailed records of any medicines stored in the home and the administration of medicines to young people. There is an identified staff member who is trained in first aid working on each shift within the home. This enables young people to receive emergency first aid if necessary.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff respect young people's privacy and confidentiality consistent with good parenting and the need to protect young people. Young people make and receive telephone calls in private and are given space and time to be alone when they wish.

The home makes sure that young people have access to information about their rights and how to deal with their concerns through the complaints procedure. Young people know how to make a complaint if they are unhappy. Young people receive a copy of the complaints procedure on admission and details of independent agencies are also accessible to them. This enables young people to voice their concerns or worries to a selection of professionals independent of the home.

The implementation of safeguarding procedures ensures effective working relationships with a range of professionals at different levels. However, some staff have not received child protection training for quite some time and the home does not have copies of the child protection procedures for all of the placing authorities who place young people within this home.

Young people are engaged to ensure that they understand how the home sets out to keep them safe. Also, staff give young people good advice about personal safety. Bullying is not currently an issue for young people, although this is something that staff monitor on a regular basis in order to prevent situations from escalating.

The home actively takes steps to make sure that young people missing from home are protected. If young people go missing, staff will try to keep in touch by mobile telephone to encourage them to return and ensure they are safe. Staff are aware and do not exceed the measures they can take to prevent a child leaving without permission under current legislation and government guidance.

Staff use effective communication skills to encourage young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour. Records relating to sanctions show that they are fair and reasonable. The home places emphasis on building positive relationships with young people and understanding young people's behaviour. Young people have clear and consistent boundaries and know what is expected of them and what is unacceptable. However, not all staff have received training in the specific behaviour management techniques used by the home.

Staff praise young people when they do well and reward them. They also reassure young people when they are upset and help them deal with their anxieties and frustrations in a positive way. Staff do not condone unacceptable behaviour and assist young people to learn to manage their behaviour and solve problems.

Young people live in a safe and secure environment. The vetting of visitors and people wishing to work at the home is thorough to make sure young people are protected. In addition, staff carry out regular health and safety checks including fire safety systems to make sure that the home is a safe place to live. However, regular testing of portable appliances within the home has not been maintained.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The home's records provide insight into the individual needs of young people. However, not all of the information is always in place that is required for a young person accommodated at the home. Such records would be expected to detail sufficiently, their assessed needs, and describe how the home aims to meet them, with written plans in place to demonstrate these.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Monthly monitoring visits are undertaken and the reports contribute to the manager's evaluation of the service. However, the opinions of parents, relatives and staff are not consistently reflected within these to assist in forming an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home.

The home has an annual development plan that reflects the development of what they want to achieve over the next twelve months.

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
17	ensure that all staff employed in the home receive appropriate training such as, child protection (Regulation 27 (4) (a))	31 May 2010
2	ensure that there is an up-to-date placement plan for each child accommodated at the home. (Regulation 12(1)(a) and (b) and Regulation 12(2))	30 April 2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure all staff in the home are aware of, trained in and follow the home's policy on behaviour management, and that the training covers reducing or avoiding the need to use physical restraint (NMS 22.8)
- ensure that staff have access to young people's placing authorities child protection procedures and that any conflicts within them are discussed with the Local Authority in which the home is situated (NMS 17.5)
- ensure all unnecessary risks to the health or safety of children are identified and where possible eliminated, for example regular testing of portable appliances within the home (NMS 26.4)
- ensure records of visits to the home for the purpose of monitoring, reflect the opinions of parents, relatives, staff and young people in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home. (NMS 32.2)