

## Inspection report for Children's Home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC052744       |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 28/03/2011     |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Sonya Robinson |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Random         |

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|--------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 15/11/2010 |
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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 service provides residential accommodation for up to five looked after young people, all with complex emotional and behavioural 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. On the ground floor, there are two lounges which are linked by connecting doors, a kitchen and dining area, staff office, utility area and a toilet. Young people'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.

Young people and staff participated within this inspection.

## **Summary**

The overall quality rating is good.

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

During this interim unannounced inspection the home's response to the actions and recommendations made at the inspection in November 2010 were discussed. In addition, staying safe was also examined and continues to be judged as good. Monthly monitoring reports is also commented on in organisation.

The home's progress to meet previous shortfalls is good overall and supports young people's welfare and safety. Staff ensure that young people continue to receive good support and care which is tailored to their individual needs.

Minor shortfalls are identified as a result of this inspection. These give rise to recommendations relating to, monthly monitoring reports, staff training, risk assessments, documentation specific to young people and age-appropriate computer games.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection two actions and five recommendations were made. The actions were that staff receive appropriate training, such as, the behaviour management of young people and that each young person placed has an up-to-date placement plan. Both of these have been undertaken.

Recommendations were made around each young person having a health care plan and personal education plan. Also, that all staff have regular one-to-one supervision from a senior staff member. These have completed and maintained.

A recommendation was made to ensure that the policy on bullying is reviewed frequently with staff and young people, including the different types of bullying and that staff receive training in the awareness of, and effective strategies to counter bullying. The inspector was informed that this remains the same, therefore this recommendation is repeated in this inspection.

Finally, a recommendation was raised to ensure that the home is decorated and furnished to a standard which creates a pleasant domestic environment. This has improved since the last inspection. However, during this tour of the premises the inspector noted a number of console games certificated 18. A recommendation is raised regarding these.

### **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.

Young people have their own bedrooms and keys so that they can keep their belongings safe. Room searches take place where there are concerns about a young person's well-being or for health and safety reasons. However, these do not consistently hold the relevant level of detail to ensure that young people have been fully informed of the reasons why such a search is necessary and what, if anything, has been found.

Personal information on young people is securely stored and no personal details are displayed anywhere in the home. Young people each have a mobile phone to receive or make private calls and can use the house phone to call family members and their social worker.

The service has an established and thorough complaints procedure. It is accessible to young people, their families, neighbours and professionals. Staff ensure that young people know how to complain and provide reassurance that they will respond appropriately to any concerns. Young people know they can contact senior staff outside of the home if necessary. Young people are confident in their communication and staff seek to resolve matters quickly.

Robust child protection procedures are in place. Staff treat the safety and welfare of young people very seriously. Staff have appropriate ongoing training and have access to written procedures. Staff talk with young people to reiterate the

importance of staying safe to develop the young person's own sense of personal responsibility. There are also good systems in place to notify Ofsted and other relevant authorities of any significant events that may occur within the home or with regards to a young person placed.

Young people are aware that bullying is not acceptable. Staff promote positive role models and encourage young people to manage difficult situations in a mature and considered way and to develop their coping skills and tolerance. However, staff have not received training in this area and young people with different abilities do not always understand the support available.

The service has appropriate systems in place to protect young people should they go missing from home, including individual protocols that have been agreed with relevant agencies. Staff are open with young people about the procedures they need to follow when this occurs. However, records do not consistently demonstrate that young people are offered an opportunity upon their return to speak to a person independent from the home, for example their social worker.

Staff view young people in a positive light and work at building supportive relationships with them. Young people are helped to develop socially acceptable behaviour by the use of incentive schemes, praise and the implementation of firm and consistently applied boundaries. Young people know what standards of behaviour are expected of them. Staff are trained in an approved behaviour management approach which promotes de-escalation techniques with physical intervention identified as a measure to be used as a last resort only. The approach is successfully implemented by staff as few restraints are noted. There is a range of sanctions imposed on the young people including the supervision of young people spending their pocket money and a reduction of pocket money for damage to property. This encourages young people to reflect on their actions.

Risk assessments for the premises are in place. However, these have not been reviewed with regards to recent damage which has occurred within the home, although repairs have been identified and are in hand. Fire safety matters receive good attention; tests on fire safety systems are recorded weekly and fire fighting equipment is regularly serviced. Young people receive fire safety instruction and are involved in fire drills at appropriate intervals. The fire risk assessment for the premises is up to date. There is clear evidence to show that the electrical system is well maintained and all electrical appliances are regularly tested.

There is a robust recruitment and selection process in operation. This ensures all persons working in the home are deemed suitable to work with young people. Visitors to the home are also checked by staff who are vigilant. This protects young people.

## **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 good.

In accordance with the minimum standards for children's homes, monthly monitoring reports are undertaken by a representative of the owner for the home and these reports contribute to the manager's evaluation of the service. However, recently these monthly visits have lapsed, though information has been subsequently followed up. Also, the opinions of parents, relatives and staff are not sufficiently reflected within these, which could aid in forming an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home.

## **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 appropriate records are in place for documenting any instances of room searches (NMS 9.8)
- ensure that the registered provider visits the home at least once a month and interviews in private with their consent, children accommodated there and staff, in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home (NMS 32.1, 32.2)
- ensure that the policy on bullying is reviewed frequently with staff and young people, including the different types of bullying and that staff receive training in the awareness of, and effective strategies to counter bullying (NMS 18.2)

- ensure that on a young person's return from being absent from care without consent that they are seen if possible by their social worker or person independent of the home (NMS 19.4)
- ensure all unnecessary risks to the healthy or safety of the environment and to individuals are identified and where possible eliminated (NMS 26.2)
- ensure that videos, games consoles and computer games may be watched/played only by children of the intended age range. No home shall have any videos or games certified as suitable only for over 18s. (NMS 15.8)