

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC053145
Inspection date	15 March 2010
Inspector	Elaine Clare
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	2 November 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

The home is a large, two storey detached house set in its own grounds in a quiet village, situated within easy travelling distance of large local towns. It is registered to accommodate two children or young people of either gender. Each child or young person is allocated their own individual bedroom at the home. The home is maintained and furnished to a high standard.

Summary

This was an unannounced interim inspection. All key standards under the outcome areas of staying safe were inspected. The action relating to accommodation was looked at, together with the recommendation concerning the children's guide within the organisation.

Children and young people continue to receive good care in this home and are effectively safeguarded. Children and young people are cared for by sufficient numbers of able and qualified staff and the home is well managed. The building is comfortable and well maintained and records are comprehensive. The recruitment of staff is generally sound but some additional measures are needed in relation to references and exploring gaps in employment.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection one action was required and one recommendation. The action to allow children and young people to open their bedroom windows to allow the room to be ventilated has been completed. The recommendation to incorporate the new company operating the home into the children's guide, including the new registered provider, has not been completed and the recommendation has been repeated.

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.

Children and young people's privacy is respected. Bedrooms, bathrooms and toilets are all lockable and children and young people can have keys to their rooms. There are good facilities for making and receiving phone calls in private. Children and young people are provided with written information about room searches and routine health and safety checks of rooms. The confidentiality of information about children and young people is safeguarded.

Children and young people know how to complain and are confident in expressing their views. The manager is accessible and receptive to their opinions. No complaints have been recorded since the last inspection. Children and young people benefit from regular visits to the home by an independent advocate who can provide support in expressing concerns or making complaints.

Children and young people are safeguarded in this home. There has been one recent child protection concern and the manager has followed procedures correctly and swiftly. Children

and young people are supported by staff in learning to keep themselves safe. They are further safeguarded by staff vigilance and the effective use of monitoring systems.

Children and young people say they are not being bullied and are confident that staff would deal with bullying, should it occur. It is made clear in the young people's guide that bullying is not acceptable in the home. Children and young people are protected by staff observation of the interactions between them and awareness of the diverse forms which bullying can take. Any incidents or concerns are dealt with appropriately, discussed within the staff group and fully recorded.

Children and young people are protected when missing from the home or when late returning. Staff try to make contact with them and endeavour to establish their whereabouts. The police, placing authorities and parents are promptly notified, when necessary. The child or young person receives a positive reception when they do return and have access to food and drink. Staff maintain comprehensive records about incidents of children and young people going missing or returning late. The manager has developed an excellent procedure for staff to follow upon the return of the child or young person which includes an informal return to home interview.

Children and young people are aware of the home's rules and benefit from a consistent and understanding approach to their behaviour. Positive behaviour is rewarded and staff work hard at de-escalating situations. Police involvement is limited. Only acceptable sanctions are imposed, restraint has not been used during the past year. Staff are encouraged to focus on alternative ways of influencing children and young people's behaviour.

The house and grounds appear safely maintained and are regularly inspected by staff. Children, young people and staff are safeguarded by regular checks of fire safety equipment and drills. Both the building and activities are risk assessed. The home is clean and food properly handled and stored.

Children and young people benefit from generally sound staff recruitment practice. Staff do not start work until the necessary references and checks are in place. However, the provider does not always obtain references from establishments where the staff member has worked with children or young people, or explored gaps in someone's employment history. Visitors to the home are carefully monitored.

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 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
27	obtain for all staff, before they start work at the home, all the information set out in Regulation 26 (Regulation 26).	30 April 2010

Recommendations

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

- review the children's guide to include details of the provider (NMS 1.2).