

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	28 July 2009
Inspector	Thomas Webber
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	18 December 2008
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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 home provides care and accommodation for up to four young people, male and female, aged 10 to 16 years with emotional or behavioural difficulties. The purpose and function of the home is to return young people to their parental home or to identified foster placements or a settled care environment.

The premises are situated on a large estate surrounded by similar style family homes. The home is a purpose-built property which is well resourced.

Summary

This unannounced interim inspection took place over one day. This forms part of the annual inspection programme to examine the standard of care and services provided to young people. At the time of inspection, four young people were accommodated.

This home continues to provide a good standard of care to young people which ensures that good outcomes are achieved for them. This is supported by positive comments made by young people and documentary evidence seen.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The home has taken some action to address the recording of the sanction and physical intervention logs, further improvements are still necessary to fully comply with this requirement. The recommendation relating to all complaints being routinely logged is no longer applicable.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The home continues to promote healthy eating for young people and a satisfactory and varied menu is established in consultation with them. The menu also provides young people with a choice at all mealtimes and caters for their likes and dislikes as well as providing different cultural meals. A selection of fresh fruit and juices are readily available to young people on a daily basis. Young people are given the opportunities to be involved in the shopping, preparation and cooking of meals with the support of staff. Young people commented very positively about the quality and quantity of meals offered.

Safe medication storage practices are maintained with all medication being kept securely in facilities in line with best practice. Appropriate systems and records are maintained for administration of medication with staff being responsible for the dispensing of medication to young people. However, the time is not always being recorded.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff actively promote the rights of young people by ensuring that their privacy and dignity is respected. Young people's information is kept secure and confidentially handled by staff. Clear policies and procedures are established for dealing with any complaints. The complaints

procedure is also referred to within the home's Young People's Guide. Staff support and promote young people to raise any issues of concern openly and the process of making a complaint is clearly understood by them. Young people feel confident in discussing any concerns or complaints with staff. The home has received no complaints since the last inspection.

Young people live in a safe environment where their welfare is promoted and they are protected from abuse. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of the young people and how to safeguard them. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place in respect to child protection and these include easy access to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board child protection procedures. All staff have either received child protection training or are booked to attend a course.

An anti-bullying policy is established which is conveyed to the young people. Action is taken by the staff to challenge and deal with any incidents of bullying either individually or on a group basis with the focus of the discussion being placed on its effects. The home has also established a points system to deal with bullying and all incidents are suitably recorded.

A clear system is also established for the reporting and recording of any event where young people go absent without consent.

Staff assist young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour through encouragement and reinforcement of the clear routines and boundaries established by the home. Positive behaviour incentives are established where young people's positive behaviour is rewarded. Staff challenge any negative behaviour of young people, their effects and ways of limiting these with sanctions and physical intervention being used where necessary. However, not all sections of these records are fully maintained. Staff are trained in the use of physical intervention training.

The health and safety policy and practice guidelines within the home are robust to ensure that the staff and young people are appropriately safeguarded. Young people and staff regularly practise fire evacuation procedures and the various fire safety records are suitably maintained.

Previous checks have confirmed that robust staff recruitment practices are established for the careful selection and vetting of all new staff to ensure the protection of young people. However, the recruitment records of new staff appointed were not available, therefore, this standard could not be assessed on this occasion.

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 satisfactory.

Young people live in a homely environment which provides sufficient communal space to meet their individual and collective needs. However, not all parts of the home are being suitably maintained with some of the furnishings and decoration showing signs of wear. Young people are provided with their own bedrooms which include en-suite facilities. Young people's bedrooms

are personalised to their individual tastes with locks fitted to their bedroom doors to promote privacy. The premises also provide young people with sufficient bath, shower and toilet facilities.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Young people are looked after by a staff team who are competent and trained to meet their needs. Staff are supported and encouraged to increase their knowledge and skill base by attending mandatory and specialist training. The minimum ratio of 80% of the staff team have not achieved the National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in the Care of Children and Young People. However, all staff have either completed or are undertaking this qualification.

The home is committed to providing sufficient staff on duty to meet the individual and collective needs of the young people. The home provides two care staff on duty to cover the early morning and then a minimum of four care staff on duty throughout the waking day. Two members of staff sleep in each night. The manager's hours are additional to these staffing levels. Positive and relaxed relationships exist between the staff and young people. A friendly and relaxed atmosphere has been created where young people are able to freely express their views about any issues. Young people commented very positively about the care and support provided to them.

The home continues to operate without a registered manager. However suitable arrangements are in place until the new manager takes up their appointment in September 2009.

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
22	ensure that all sections of the sanctions and restraint books are consistently recorded (Regulation 17(4))	10 August 2009
24	ensure that all parts of the home are suitably furnished and decorated. (Regulation 31(2)(c)&(e))	30 November 2009

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the time is always recorded on young people's medication records (NMS 13)