

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC061232
Inspector	Clare Davies
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Bristol City Council
Registered person address	The Council House College Green BRISTOL BS1 5TR
Responsible individual	Karen Mary Gazzard
Registered manager	Tracy Connolly
Date of last inspection	23/01/2014

Inspection date	29/04/2014
------------------------	------------

Previous inspection	satisfactory progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
-------------------	-------------

Young people receive personalised care from a committed team of staff. They are helped to come to terms with their experiences and grow in confidence to make positive changes in their lives. Young people benefit from collaborative working between the staff team, family members and other professionals. Social workers report positively on the care provided by the staff team.

Young people are positive about this home and feel secure in their placements as a result of the structure and boundaries in place. The strength of relationships between young people and staff contribute to their feeling of being safe. Staff know the young people well and understand their individual care needs.

Consultation ensures that the views of young people are gathered and that they contribute to the development and running of the home. The manager has effective systems to monitor the quality of care and has a good grasp of the strengths of the service and areas for development. Shortfalls identified relate to the need records to be collated when young people go missing, some improvements to the environment and staff training on e-safety.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home provides care and accommodation for up to five young people who may have emotional or behavioural difficulties. The home is managed by the local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/01/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
03/10/2013	Full	good
09/01/2013	Interim	good progress
01/08/2012	Full	good

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

Recommendations

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

- ensure that written records kept by the home when a child goes missing detail action taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return, any reasons given by the child for running away from the home and any action taken in the light of those reasons. In particular, ensure that these records are in one document (NMS 5.10)
- ensure that the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated (NMS 10.3)
- ensure risk assessments of the whole children's home environment are carried out, to identify any potential sources of harm to the children are recorded in writing and regularly reviewed. In particular, review the fire door at the bottom of the stairs (NMS 10.8)
- ensure that staff receive high quality training to enhance their individual skills and to keep them up-to-date with professional and legal developments. In

particular, e-safety. (NMS 18)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people make good progress while living in this children's home. Those who have experienced considerable disruption in their lives benefit from a period of stability. Young people form some very good relationships with staff which enable them to find the confidence to talk to staff and share any worries or concerns they may have. Surveys and a suggestion box provide other ways for young people to raise issues and give their views.

Young people recognise that the staff are there to support them and have helped them to change some of their behaviour. They identify personal improvements such as their reduction in incidents of going missing, changes to improve their health and improved attendance in education. Comments on this placement range from 'I really like it here' to 'it's alright'. Young people accept and understand that some rules are in place to keep them safe even when they may seem restrictive at times, including for example unsupervised time out, blocked websites on the computer and supervision by staff.

Young people access health services with support from the staff team. Matters of sexual health and the misuse of drugs and alcohol are discussed to ensure the most appropriate support is arranged. Young people meet the looked after children's nurse when she visits the home; this enables them to speak directly to a health professional for advice and support. Health promotion literature encourages young people to make informed healthy choices.

Young people attend education and some have achieved formal qualifications ahead of their peers. Those in part-time education can access some e-learning and work with a personal tutor. In addition young people use their education time within the home to engage in purposeful activities such as gardening, cooking, furniture restoration and craft.

Young people take part in activities within the wider community with friends and, on occasions, with staff. Access to youth clubs and sports are encouraged to develop hobbies, skills and interests. Planting vegetables is popular with some young people as they develop an interest in gardening and cooking. Young people enjoy going out to meet family and friends and staff support appropriate relationships and friendships by providing assistance with travel arrangements. This enables young people to maintain contact with the people who are important to them.

Young people develop independence. According to their age and ability, young people undertake domestic chores to contribute to the running of the home such as keeping their bedroom tidy and helping in the kitchen. Older young people receive a budget to buy and prepare their own meals. These life skills prepare them for the transition into

adulthood and to live independently.

Quality of care

good

Young people speak positively of this home and the support and guidance from the staff team. Social workers express good levels of satisfaction about the quality of care provided with comments such as, 'They are doing a brilliant job', 'the placement meets the young person's needs well' and 'I receive good regular communication'.

Young people have developed some good relationships with the staff and manager. The strength of these relationships supports young people in making progress as they develop trust and confidence in the staff team and others. Young people are seen as individuals; there is consideration for specific needs, including those relating to their cultural background and personal identity.

A strength of this home is the commitment to ensure that young people can maintain contact with family and friends. The manager and staff team work with family members, where appropriate, to secure relationships and work together on shared aims for young people.

House meetings for young people enable them to express their opinions and be consulted on current issues. Keywork sessions support young people to make known their views and wishes about their placement. This leads on to involvement with care planning and personal targets. Young people are encouraged to bring issues to these forums and are provided with advice and guidance on how to make a complaint if they are not happy with the initial response to the matters raised. Records show that young people have made complaints and these have been resolved to their satisfaction.

There is good access to health services in the community such as the local surgery, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, the designated nurse for looked after children, dentists and opticians. Contact with these health professionals ensures that young people receive good health care for their physical and emotional well-being.

Young people access a range of educational provision according to their individual needs. Staff maintain good communication with education staff and support young people with their attendance. Older young people are supported to select college courses and attend interviews. This level of support enables young people to take the next steps towards independence as they consider their future in training, education or employment.

The detached house is situated on an estate close to amenities and public transport.

Generally the home is maintained well. However, one bedroom wall requires some repair and re-decoration. The garden has a new vegetable patch, some herbs and fruit trees. Young people are encouraged to participate in growing the vegetables and to take an interest in gardening.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people are encouraged to communicate any concerns they have with an adult. Young people confidently report that they can talk to staff and records support this.

Staff are suitably trained in child protection and received regular updates. Staff report the level of training is effective in their day-to-day involvement with young people and their own professional development. Risk assessments are active documents and are regularly reviewed. Staff supervision of young people is increased when risks associated with behaviour are considered high. Electronic surveillance is located in two communal areas of the home to assist with supervision and keep young people safe.

Safeguarding concerns are promptly reported to the local authority and placing social workers. The manager and staff have developed good working relationships with other agencies such as the police, social workers and the local authority designated officer. This ensures that multi-agency discussions explore the safety and well-being of young people.

There have been some incidents of young people going missing. When this occurs, staff actively look for the young people as they recognise their vulnerabilities. There are clear and up-to-date protocols with the police and the placing authorities. This ensures that appropriate action is taken to ensure young people return safely. Young people know that staff are concerned for their safety and will support them through difficulties without being judgemental; this also contributes to young people feeling secure in their placement. Generally the number of incidents of young people going missing has reduced considerably, however some events are still occurring. While staff take appropriate action to ensure the safe return of young people, the records made during these incidents are not collated in a single document and do not fully reflect all the actions taken. This hinders the monitoring of such behaviour in order to identify patterns or trends.

Staff promote positive behaviour and support young people to make choices and take responsibility for their actions. The training that staff receive on responding to challenging behaviour is based on redirection and purposeful intervention to calm a situation. This means that the use of physical intervention is rare; it is only used when felt necessary to ensure safety. Two team members are qualified instructors; they are available to provide valuable guidance and support to colleagues with regards to behaviour management techniques.

The environment is subject to regular health and safety checks. Staff and young people have opportunities to experience an evacuation of the building which ensures that they know what to do in the event of a fire. Fire doors are strategically placed in the home but do not all have self-closing mechanisms. Therefore it is recommended that a review of their suitability and effectiveness is undertaken.

Leadership and management

good

The manager is experienced and qualified, having been in post for four years. Further professional development is planned for additional management qualifications. Staff, young people and social workers report that the manager is approachable and supportive.

The manager and the team are implementing new legislation and discussing these developments at team meetings. The Statement of Purpose is under review and the manager has started to consider the location of the home and identify any risks. The children's guide is of a good quality and provides young people with information that is important for them to know and understand.

The staff team are enthusiastic about their work and demonstrate a commitment to helping young people achieve good outcomes. Staff members feel supported in their work; a good training programme and clear policies and procedures underpin their practice. Within the organisation there is a training department and key people with skills and expertise in the role of trainers and instructors. This means that the manager and staff team have ready access to support and guidance, as required, to benefit young people. Most staff have had training on the safe use of social media and the internet however, given the fast pace of change in this area, further training is required. This will ensure that staff are knowledgeable on the communication systems used by young people and ensure that staff are better informed about the risks and how young people can use social media safely.

The home is sufficiently staffed and the diverse team provides a good balance of age, gender and ethnicity. Currently there is only one vacant post and this has been filled. This provides a stable staff team without the need to use agency staff thereby promoting continuity of care for young people.

The manager is keen to improve the service through the use of a development plan and has addressed the recommendations from the last inspection. Consequently all notifications and incidents are filed in one place for ease of reference. The procedures to follow when any young person goes missing are compatible with local police protocols and the latest guidance from the Department of Education. These improvements ensure that staff have access to the most up-to-date guidance on the safety and welfare of young people. Where possible, young people are involved in the development plan, particularly around improvements to the physical environment. This level of consultation and involvement encourages children to

invest in the home and respect it.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information 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 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.