

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC061795
Inspection date	18 March 2010
Inspector	Kevin Whatley
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	16 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 setting is one of three homes operated by the same organisation. The home aims to provide a holistic approach to the welfare and development of young people in their care, accommodating six young people on a planned or emergency basis between the ages of 12 to 17 years on admission. All young people living at the home will have emotional or behavioural difficulties. The service benefits from good transport and access to local amenities and services.

Summary

This random inspection was unannounced taking place on a weekday. Two recommendations were made at the last inspection, both of which have been addressed. One action was made as a result of this inspection. Key standards relating to staying safe were assessed on this occasion. Rigorous and comprehensive safeguarding policies and practices continue to be implemented which ensures young people are as safe as can be. The standard of interventions aimed at assisting young people who may present with challenging behaviours remains excellent. Young people live in an environment that is well maintained and homely. The home continues to be managed to a high and consistent standard.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Two recommendations were made as a result of the last inspection. One related to ensuring the redecoration of the setting continued, while the second addressed the need to have an application put forward for the acting manager to be registered with Ofsted. The décor of the home has been further improved including new carpets and a separate room for education and study. Since the last inspection a managerial re-structuring has taken place with the previous registered manager now back in their role as acting manager; an application to register them again as manager for the setting is due to be sent in to Ofsted.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Young people have their privacy respected, with staff seen to knock when entering bedrooms. Bedrooms are only entered without the permission of young people when it is necessary to do so to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all in the home. All confidential information is secured appropriately in the office. Staff are mindful not to discuss sensitive or personal information in front of young people.

A clear and open process ensures young people are able to raise their complaints or concerns easily. Details of how to complain are displayed openly in the home and are contained within the young person's guide along with details of independent advocacy services. When complaints are made, swift actions are taken to ensure the matter is investigated swiftly and decisively. The current young person group clearly feel able to talk with staff with the atmosphere being relaxed and open. Since the last inspection no complaints have been received by Ofsted.

Young people are kept as safe as possible from the risks of harm. Staff receive appropriate training in safeguarding including the home's, and the local authority's protocols in identifying and responding to child protection concerns or incidents. New staff undertake child protection awareness training as part of their induction, whilst existing staff receive refresher and advanced training. When child protection matters arise these are reported to the relevant agencies in good time. Excellent joint working procedures ensure all responsible parties are involved in addressing the potential and known risks in which young people may place themselves. Similarly young people are provided with outstanding staff care and input in an attempt to help them gain an insight into their own vulnerability.

A rigorous recruitment process ensures no members of staff work with young people unless all the required checks and confirmations have been received and considered.

Young people have their negative and challenging behaviours extremely well assessed and planned for. Each young person has a behaviour management plan which details any known or potentially negative, challenging or risky behaviours. Such behaviours include bullying, violence or self harm with a clear emphasis on working with young people to assist them to take responsibility for their own actions. Staff are guided in the manner that they should respond to individual situations or incidents with young people themselves, consulted as part of the process.

All staff have received appropriate training in the use of physical intervention with the level of restraints currently being very low. It is clear the home ethos is one of always seeking alternatives to the use of physical intervention, notably as many of the young people are aged in their mid to late teens.

Risky and inappropriate behaviours such as leaving the home without permission and bullying are carefully and consistently addressed. Each young person has these behaviours considered on an individual basis although the idea of bullying is not tolerated at any level. The setting has a very clear anti-bullying protocol; no significant issues were identified. When young people leave the home without permission they are reported missing to the police in line with agreed procedures. Very good records of incidents are maintained with the setting being pro-active in ensuring all agencies work closely together.

Risk assessments are compiled on every young person which highlight their particularly challenging or risky behaviours. Appropriate incentive targets allow young people to receive additional rewards for their efforts and attitude. A small and appropriate number of sanctions are in place should young people behave in a manner that is unacceptable. The use of such sanctions is appropriate, with any given matching the nature of the behaviour or incident.

The health and safety of all those who live and work at the home is addressed well. The regular checking, testing and servicing of fire fighting, gas and electrical equipment and appliances takes place routinely. Fire alarm and emergency lighting tests are completed along with regular fire evacuation drills.

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 good.

Young people benefit from living in an environment which continues to be improved. The setting is homely throughout with young people creating art work which is displayed around the home. Young people are also consulted on the colours and décor of the communal areas as well as being able to decorate their own rooms in the style they prefer.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The setting is managed extremely well by practitioners who have a wealth of experience and knowledge. Young people are clearly seen as of paramount importance in all aspects of care provision. Since the last inspection there has been some managerial changes with a senior manager within the organisation returning to their role as manager for the setting. It is clear the standard of care has remained high and consistent irrespective of any managerial restructuring.

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
34	ensure an application is submitted to Ofsted in relation to a suitable person becoming registered manager for the service. (Regulation 7 (1))	22 May 2010

Recommendations

There are no recommendations.