

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Monica Farrimond
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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 is a children's home for three young people, from 10 to 17 years old who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is a semi-detached house and its location enables young people to access facilities in the community easily. It is close to bus stops, a railway station, local schools, shops, youth groups, leisure centres, the beach and parks.

At the time of the inspection one young person was accommodated in the home.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

At this unannounced full inspection, all key standards were inspected. In addition, the actions and recommendations made at the previous inspection were reviewed. Young people's welfare is enhanced by positive relationships that exist between experienced staff and young people and between young people and their peers. Young people are encouraged to eat healthily, they are kept safe and they are provided with support from professional services outside the home. The home's management and staff are working effectively and have a strong commitment and focus on improvement. The promotion of equality and diversity is good throughout the standards inspected.

Improvements since the last inspection

During the last inspection in August 2010, there were many aspects of the management of the home and lack of statutory documentation that gave rise to concerns about the welfare of the young people accommodated; these issues have been fully addressed and the home now complies with the Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the national minimum standards. Documentation and issues in relation to the home's risk assessments, planning meetings, administration of medication, and confidentiality had been highlighted as needing improvement. These are now in place and provide a comprehensive structure on which care plans are based and the development of young people's abilities and progress monitored. Evidence of this is seen in all the outcome areas throughout this report. Good practice issues have also been developed in relation to the monitoring of young people going missing from the home and bullying. All young people have their own individual care files. The files include all information as identified in Schedule 3 of the regulations. Young people's case files are kept securely, and issues relating to confidentiality have been addressed.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young people are fully involved in the compilation of menus, ensuring their food likes, dislikes and any allergies they may have are taken in to account. Staff work with them to ensure meals offered form a balanced, healthy diet. Staff give young people good advice and guidance on which foodstuffs are healthier to eat. Young people are encouraged to try foods from differing areas of the world and options are available at all mealtimes. Specialist diets can be catered for and specialist foodstuffs obtained if necessary. Fresh fruit is readily available for young people at any time and they help staff to shop for groceries and prepare meals. Young people make themselves snacks and drinks and some young people prepare and cook their own meals. All care staff receive appropriate food hygiene training, ensuring they are aware of safe procedures to follow when preparing meals. The dining area is suitably sized, decorated and furnished.

Good practices, policies and procedures are in place to ensure young people's health needs are well met. Individual health care plans, that cover all required areas, are compiled for each young person, and all are registered with local doctors, dentists and opticians practices. Young people receive a medical check soon after admission and then receive regular health checks and annual medical check ups. Detailed records are kept of all health appointments for young people, if they refuse to attend any such appointment, and of any significant illnesses, accidents or injuries they may have. Suitably signed medical consent forms, covering all required areas, are obtained for all young people and any with specific health needs are provided with good individual support and help. Young people are assisted and supported to address their personal hygiene needs.

All staff receive first aid training, ensuring they can offer immediate assistance in case of medical emergency. Medication is securely stored and a running total of the contents of the medicine cabinets kept. Controlled drugs are stored separately and a controlled drugs register kept. Detailed written records are kept of all medication, treatment and first aid given to young people. Medication administration records are suitably kept. All relevant staff receive appropriate safe medication training. Young people's health needs are well met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Good policies, procedures and work practices are in place that ensure young people's right to privacy and confidentiality is respected. All young people have their own individual single bedrooms with appropriate locks on the doors. On very rare occasions it has proven necessary to search young people's possessions or rooms. All such searches are appropriately recorded and the documentation used meets requirements.

No formal complaints have been made by young people since the last inspection. The complaints policy, procedures and documentation meet requirements. Young people are given good information on the various ways they can make a formal complaint, and given the contact numbers of agencies they can make a complaint directly to if they wish.

There are no current child protection issues or concerns. Good child protection policies and procedures are in place and are regularly reviewed and updated. All staff receive regularly updated child protection training. Good records are maintained of any child protection referrals made and any subsequent investigations. These actions show the home takes suitable measures to ensure staff have a good working knowledge of policies and procedures that protect young people from abuse.

Suitable policies and procedures are in place on bullying. It is not an issue or concern for young people. Good policies are in place that detail action for staff to take should a young person go absent without permission. The home has formed good working links with the local police, and procedures followed if a young person goes missing. All incidents are formally recorded and documentation used for this meets requirements.

A good behaviour management system is in place, based on working positively with young people and encouraging, praising and rewarding acceptable behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour is addressed and fully discussed with young people and they are given advice and guidance on ways to avoid repeating such behaviours. On isolated occasions sanctions are imposed and young people may be asked to pay towards any costs their behaviours have incurred. The home aims to enable young people to see that their behaviour has consequences. Staff are aware of the types of sanctions they can and cannot use and these are clearly detailed in policy documents. All sanctions imposed are suitably recorded.

On rare occasions it has proven necessary to use physical interventions with young people. Staff are fully aware of when it may be permissible to use physical interventions with young people. All such incidents are fully recorded and reported to placing authorities and where applicable, to parents or carers. The documentation used for recording physical interventions meets requirements.

There are sufficient baths, showers and toilets to fully meet young people's needs and the doors on all such facilities have suitable locks fitted to afford privacy. A 'waking night staff' member is on duty each night and a member of the care staff team 'sleeps in', providing support for young people throughout the night. Staff with the responsibility for overseeing health and safety issues and compiling risk assessments have received appropriate training for this role. All care staff receive risk assessment and health and safety training. Relevant risk assessments are in place and are reviewed at least annually. Individual risk assessments are compiled on each young person and reviewed monthly. All fire drills, fire alarm tests and fire safety equipment checks are up-to-date. All electrical appliances are checked annually. No obvious health and safety hazards were observed during the inspection.

Suitable staff recruitment procedures, that meet with regulatory requirements, are in place. Staff recruitment files contain relevant information to show all required checks have been carried out before staff commence employment. This shows the home takes all reasonable measures to ensure staff employed are suitable to work with young people. All visitors are required to sign the visitors book.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff at the home provide individual support and guidance to the young people at the home by talking and spending time with them. Individual needs, are documented in placement plans. Therefore a consistent approach by all the staff team to issues relating to care, health, and education is taken, ensuring the development of the young people's progress and related shortfalls is monitored. For example, mutually agreed targets and goals for young people's educational and cultural needs are documented and reviewed.

The promotion of education is viewed as an essential element of the young people's care, therefore, the educational welfare of the young people accommodated is promoted. Young people's care plans are up to date and issues around education, and practical ways of supporting young people's education have been addressed. Consequently, the young people's needs, achievements and aspirations are promoted as part of their preparation for moving on to independence and adulthood.

The young people are encouraged to take part in a range of activities and leisure interests to promote confidence and develop new skills; leisure interests in which a young person has talents or abilities are documented within placement plans.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Individual up-to-date placement plans are in place for the young people. This means that the home has a clear process in place for meeting the individual needs of those young people. The way in which the home and placing authorities function, enhances the young people's development and enables the staff to support young people into their next placement. There is clear evidence on young people's files to suggest that statutory reviews are undertaken within the required timescales. When reviews take place there is evidence that the outcomes are recorded and any new goals and needs identified are incorporated into comprehensive placement plans. Contact arrangements for young people are clearly documented in placements plans. Comprehensive information supplied by the placing authority identifies the risks to young people's welfare and promotes the young people's independence and opportunities to make choices in everyday life.

Good systems are in place for young people moving into the home. Generally young people will visit the home before admission and meet staff and young people already

resident. If practicable, staff may visit the young person in their home area before admission. Young people resident are kept fully informed about new admissions and senior staff fully assess the possible effect any new admission may have on young people already resident. Young people are provided with good information about the home before admission and may bring personal possessions with them.

Young people's views are sought formally and informally on a daily basis about any issues that affect them and there is good communication between staff and young people. The home maintains regular contact with placing authorities and parents or carers, keeping them fully informed and seeking their views and opinions.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Suitable systems are in place to help young people develop skills to enable them to look after themselves. They are encouraged to be independent.

The home provides a good standard of accommodation for young people. All have their own individual single bedroom which they may personalise with posters and photographs if they wish. All bedrooms have at least one window providing natural light, suitable lighting, furniture for clothes storage and areas for personal study. The facilities are suitably decorated and furnished throughout and kept clean and tidy. There is central heating throughout and space for young people to engage in leisure activities and meet with visitors. Young people can have a say in the general décor, furnishings and upkeep of the home and any areas requiring repair or maintenance are promptly addressed.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The service has a Statement of Purpose that sets out how young people will be cared for when they stay at the home. The young person's guide to the service is produced in a child-friendly format, giving young people a clear and detailed picture of how the home works and who will be looking after them during their stay.

The organisation has recently appointed a suitably qualified and experienced manager and will be submitting an application to Ofsted for her to become the Registered Manager.

Staff are supervised within the preferred timescales, thus personal development and training needs are identified. Staff are encouraged to attend appropriate training to assist them to promote the welfare of young people accommodated at the home. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The senior management and staff are knowledgeable of their responsibilities within equality and diversity legislation and of good practice. The comprehensive placement plans and outcome of review meetings identify individual needs as well as monitor young people's progress. Staff

demonstrate a commitment to supporting young people and effectively promote the welfare of young people.

The management of the home and monitoring by the manager is effective. Regulation 33 monitoring visits to the home are undertaken and reports issued. Any improvements needed to the quality of care or concerns in relation to the placement of the young people are identified and action taken. This level of monitoring further enhances young people's safety and welfare and ensures that their needs are met.

All young people have their own individual care files. The files include all information as identified in Schedule 3 of regulations. Young people's case files are kept securely.

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/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Std.	Action	Due date
34	ensure that immediate steps are taken to register the manager with Ofsted. (Care Standards Act Section 12 (1))	29/11/2010