

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC062931
Inspection date	24/02/2011
Inspector	Lucy Ansell / Angus Mackay
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	08/11/2010
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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 semi-detached three storey property in a residential area. There is a basement that is designated as the Registered Manager's office. The house is situated very close to the town centre and all the local amenities are easy to access.

There is a main line rail connection, shops, cinema, sports facilities, parks and the beach within a five minute walk. All health services are available locally.

The home is registered to accommodate and care for up-to-three young people aged between eight and 17 years on admission. The home provides medium to long-term residential care. At the time of this inspection three young people were living in the home.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection and no young people were present at the time of the inspection. The focus of the inspection was to look at staying safe and assess whether the previous recommendations have been met.

Judgements remain the same as the last inspection report if not fully inspected. A range of activities and time with staff provide opportunities for young people to learn skills which will help them work towards independence and leaving care. Staff are well trained and excellent processes are in place to keep young people safe.

There are no actions or recommendations resulting from this inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

The home had two recommendations made at the last inspection; these were checked and have been met. The home now has 80% of its existing staff group with or working towards the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 or Level 4. The home was also asked to ensure all young people received a letter following up their complaint. The home has received no new complaints but has this process in place when it is next required. This will ensure the continued safety and welfare of the young people.

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.

The required policies and robust induction practices for all staff ensures respect for each young person's privacy and confidentiality. Staff are also clear when information needs to be shared for the welfare of young people. The male and female staff are sensitive to any gender issues when caring for the young people. Room searches are undertaken with respect for their space and possessions, and only when necessary for the young people's welfare. The home respects young people's privacy when making telephone calls, and they can use their own mobiles when wishing to contact family and friends.

The complaints process is transparent and well managed. Children and young people have used systems such as key-worker sessions, weekly house meetings and direct approaches to staff rather than the formal complaints procedure to raise their recent concerns. The children and young people have a high level of involvement in decision making; for example evidence of minutes from young people's meetings and concerns relating to sanctions being acted upon. To ensure children's complaints are heard and any trends or patterns identified the quality assurance person collates and analyses all significant evidence and reports back to the Registered Manager.

Children and young people continue to have their welfare promoted and to be protected from possible sources of harm and abuse by the use of the robust child protection systems. Staff have clear comprehensive policies, regular training and expert support and guidance from the dedicated safeguarding officers to assist them in providing a safe environment for children and young people. Children's safety is enhanced by appropriate guided discussions in house meetings and with expert educational guidance provided in relation to issues including sexual health, drug and alcohol abuse.

Young people are protected from bullying. They participate in discussions on bullying in house meetings and are encouraged to respect others through their positive attitude targets. Children and young people are further protected from bullying by high staffing ratios which allow for one-to-one working and for separate activities to be provided when there are disagreements. Staff are trained to provide a safe environment free from bullying, initially through induction training but also through other training in child protection and dealing with difficult behaviour, for example using de-escalation techniques.

Staff are provided with clear guidance on safe procedures to follow if a child leaves without permission. This is supported by individual procedures for each child and

detailed individual risk assessments. These cover a range of approaches to use when behaviours escalate and to recognise any warning signals where young people may go missing. To further enhance the safety of children and young people they are seen by the Responsible Individual after their return, and then placement plans, risk assessments or care practices are adjusted where necessary.

Staff consistently encourage and praise socially acceptable behaviour. They manage poor behaviour by a combination of rewards, verbal prompts, sanctions or as a last resort, restraint. To minimise the risk of harm to children and young people staff are trained in the approved method of restraint and incidences are recorded, analysed and then acted upon where necessary by the Registered Manager. Staff have a strong focus on positive approaches with children and young people, evidenced by the positive attitudes charts, detailed 24-hour management plan and the newly developed emotional needs analysis. There is strong evidence of children being positively listened to with individualised weekly planners and sanctions being changed to reflect a child's opinion.

Excellent measures are undertaken to ensure the safety and security of the young people. Risk assessments are in place for the premises and completed for any activities undertaken; the organisation also has the required public liability insurance. Positive steps are taken to protect against the risk of fire and other hazards. Fire prevention equipment is well managed and regular fire drills teach the staff and young people how to evacuate in the event of a fire; monitoring of the drills ensures that all personnel are appropriately trained.

Recruitment procedures ensure that staff are carefully vetted and visitors well monitored, to prevent the young people being exposed to potential threats. Recruitment is managed centrally within the organisation but the process heavily involves the home's manager or deputy. Records confirm that all the required information is received prior to employment and all required checks have been completed before they commence work in the home. Visitors and contractors are required to show evidence of identification and to sign the visitors' book; they are then well supervised while on site.

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.