

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC063116
Inspection date	26 January 2010
Inspector	Mark Blesky
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	28 July 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

This is a children's home for up to six young people. The home has the appearance of a large family home with little to distinguish it from other homes in the neighbourhood. The house is in a residential street in a seaside town and close to shops, community facilities and the beach. There is adequate space in the home for the children that are accommodated and the home has a rear garden for young people to use.

Summary

This interim inspection looked at the progress the setting has made with the recommendations made at the last inspection of July 2009. These related to improvements to the accommodation and maintenance schedules. Staying safe and economic wellbeing were looked at during this inspection. Being healthy, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution and organisation were not looked at during this inspection. The Registered Manager has reviewed maintenance schedules and put into place procedures that ensure necessary maintenance work is carried out to the home. The provision has taken appropriate action to resolve previous requirements.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection a recommendation was made for the Registered Manager to improve and carry out all necessary maintenance. Maintenance schedules are now in place and prompt repair of the home is carried out. The registered person has taken appropriate steps to improve the quality of the home for 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 good.

All young people are treated with respect and staff ensure that each young person's information is treated confidentially. Staff knock on young people's bedroom doors before entering and young people are able to wash and dress in private. If young people need any support with personal matters staff respond sensitively and planning is undertaken to ensure appropriate support is put into place. Young people say that staff are aware of their needs and allow them time alone and privacy.

All complaints are addressed using robust procedures. The Registered Manager is made aware of all significant complaints and records are made of all attempts to resolve the matter. Young people are consulted throughout the process and asked to agree the final resolution or invited to make further representation.

All staff are trained in matters of safeguarding and child protection. A safeguarding co-ordinator consults with the home and oversees all matters of this nature. The safeguarding procedures used by the home mirror those of the local authority. All suspected incidents are well documented and recorded.

Anti-bullying procedures are in place and the home has recently introduced a dedicated recording system for all suspected cases of bullying. Staff are vigilant to signs of bullying and all staff receive anti-bullying training along with their mandatory core training. Young people say that bullying is not a feature in this home and say that staff will not allow bullying to happen.

When young people are absent without authority staff follow clear procedures to search, report and recover the young person. The home also uses in-house on-call and out of hours services should more staff be needed or consultation is needed with senior staff. It was noted that whilst recording of the event is well managed, some records do not evidence discussion with the young person to determine reasons given for absconding or action taken as a result.

When young people act in a negative manner staff use appropriate behaviour modification to discourage this. Staff typically meet with the young person and through discussion, try and encourage more positive behaviour. Approved sanctions are available to staff in cases where greater levels of control are necessary. Sanctions are not overly punitive and staff use sanctions sparingly. Young people say that staff always warn them when their behaviour is of concern and give them an opportunity to behave more positively. It was noted that some recorded incidents lacked clear evidence of the young person's behaviour that resulted in a sanction. All young people are subject to comprehensive risk assessment. Known risks, either from the environment or related to known behaviours, are maintained for each young person. Action is taken to carry out further risk assessment if risk levels change or new risks become apparent. All young people are aware of the risk assessments that are carried out for them.

Fire safety and health and safety assessment is routinely carried out in the home and the home carries out regular fire evacuation tests and drills.

All new staff are recruited and employed through an established recruitment panel. No newly employed staff members are allowed unsupervised access to the home or young people until appropriate recruitment and reference checks are completed. All visitors to the home are signed in and out by the staff on duty in the home visitors book.

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.

The home is pleasantly decorated throughout and all young people are able to express their opinions regarding decoration and furnishings. Young people are able to choose how their rooms are painted and encouraged to personalise their own space. Maintenance is typically well organised, some minor repair and replacement is awaiting completion. However, maintenance and repair is within appropriate timescales. Furnishings and decoration is of high standard with good quality furnishing and fixtures. The home is equipped with games tables that include a pool table, table tennis and air hockey table. The home is also decorated with an array of children's artwork, which adds to the pleasant ambience and makes the house look very homely. Staff clearly work hard to maintain this pleasant environment.

Organisation

The organisation is not judged.

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
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Recommendations

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

- ensure written records are made of the circumstances of all incidents of absconding, all action taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return, any reasons given by the child for absconding, and any action taken in the light of those reasons (National Minimum Standards 19.6)
- ensure adequate records are kept of the name of the child, the date, time and location, details of the behaviour requiring sanction, the nature of the sanction used, the duration of the sanction, the name of the staff member(s) and the signature of a person authorised by the registered person to make the record. (National Minimum Standards 22.10)