

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC063380
Inspection date	22/03/2011
Inspector	Robert Hewston
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	05/10/2010
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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

Generally, the home provides care for up to four young people between the ages of nine to 17 years on a medium to long-term basis. However, in certain circumstances the home can accommodate young people over the age of 17. The property is a large, detached Victorian family house set in its own grounds in a quiet residential area within walking distance of a local shopping centre. The aim of the home is to offer individualised support designed to achieve stability and to prepare for independence where identified. Education can be provided by a range of local schools or by the company's own school. Therapeutic provision is also available to young people as identified within their placement plans.

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. One action and one recommendation, in staying safe, were raised at the last inspection. Therefore, outcome areas of being healthy; enjoying and achieving; making a positive contribution; economic well-being and organisation were not looked at during this inspection. Standards in relation to staying safe were inspected. Two young people are resident but did not participate in this inspection.

The overall quality rating for the home remains good. The staying safe judgement has been moved from good to outstanding. All previous actions and recommendations have been met very well. As a result of this inspection there are no actions or recommendations made.

Each young person is receiving a focused level of care and support that very successfully promotes their personal safety and welfare. Young people are clearly benefiting from living in a home that has a strong emphasis on promoting their health, safety and welfare exceptionally well. The young people are fully consulted and involved in their care and living arrangements.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection in October 2010 raised one action and one recommendation.

The action was to ensure unnecessary risks from adults living in the home to the health or safety of children are identified and so far as possible eliminated. Robust and in-depth risk assessments have been completed although the young person, who was over the age of 17, has since moved out.

The recommendation was to ensure a copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board's Procedures is kept in the home and staff read these and are knowledgeable about them. All young people's local authority safeguarding procedures are available in the office for staff to read. A new staff member confirmed it is part of the induction procedures that he is aware of all young people's local authorities safeguarding procedures.

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's privacy is respected. They can lock their bedroom doors and staff will always knock before entering bedrooms. Staff are aware of the balance between ensuring young people's privacy and at times needing to provide a higher level of supervision to help ensure their safety. Records are stored securely and information is only shared with those people who need to know the information to ensure the safety of young people and others. There are clear procedures and guidance for staff to follow if they need to search a young person's room to ensure their safety.

Young people trust the staff and manager to listen to their concerns and act on them. They take such concerns seriously and address them without delay. Each young person's right to complain is supported by the staff team. Records show that their complaints are addressed in accordance with the complaints procedure. This encourages a culture of openness where young people feel able to raise worries or issues. Staff try to deal with them as quickly and effectively as possible. This is also the practice where there are concerns about bullying. Young people feel safe to report bullying. Staff work hard with all young people to prevent any bullying by using one-to-one discussions and young people's meetings. This helps young people to understand the impact of their actions or words. As a consequence young people can feel confident staff will intervene to make sure they are protected from bullying.

Staff are suitably trained in identifying and reporting signs of abuse. Safeguarding is managed well with specific risk assessments in place to help staff be aware of how best to manage an incident. Policies and the Local Safeguarding Children Board's procedures are available to inform and guide staff. Staff receive current guidance and a wide range of training in all aspects of child protection, safeguarding and related topics. This increases safeguards to protect young people from harm in the home. The welfare of young people is promoted very well, young people are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse. The home has robust policies and procedures, which very effectively keep young people and staff safe.

Young people who put themselves at risk through being absent without consent are protected in accordance with the home's policy and procedures. The policy for staff regarding absconding behaviour provides clear guidance on ways to minimise the risks involved if a young person is missing. Records are very well kept of all such incidents. Staff complete detailed and comprehensive risk assessments which are reviewed and updated on a monthly basis. Discussions regarding being absent without authority are held with young people during key working sessions. These underpin the care afforded to young people ensuring their safety and welfare is promoted at all times. These measures, to date, have been highly successfully and there has been a significant reduction in young people being absent without permission. Consequently, young people are protected from the potential dangers associated with such absences.

Staff communicate clear expectations regarding boundaries and acceptable behaviour, which sufficiently helps young people to begin to understand the consequences of their behaviour. The approach by the staff to behaviour management is based on redirection and purposeful intervention to calm the situation as quickly as possible. Young people's individual risk assessments highlight the methods to be used to assist a young person in calming down. The specific training in attachment theory has enhanced staff understanding of young people's needs especially towards their parents and other family members. This method of working has very successfully helped not just the young people, but parents, other family members and friends, where appropriate, and has enabled young people to have regular contact with their family and friends. The increase in attachment practice is improving the consistency and high level of care being provided to young people. The drive from the management team to ensure all training is implemented in practice is already benefitting the young people and there have been very positive changes to their behaviours. These principles characterise the home's exceptional behaviour management policy that promotes encouragement and reinforcement of desired behaviours and provides clear supportive strategies to overcome unacceptable conduct. This is an area of outstanding practice.

A key success of the home is the way in which staff are able to very effectively engage with young people about matters that are significant to their safety and protection. These important areas are covered as part of the home's approach to managing risks and raising young people's awareness. For example, individual and group work sessions are regularly delivered covering a wide range of subject areas like personal safety, behaviour, relationships and bullying. These sessions are evaluated and assessed to ensure they are relevant and meaningful to each young person's circumstances and needs.

Required checks and maintenance with regard to electric, gas and water regulations are regularly completed. The home has risk assessments for all aspects of safety within the home and surrounding grounds. The assessments include control of substances hazardous to health, fire, young people's behaviour and activities. Risk assessments are taken into account when planning daily activities in the home and for trips, outings and holidays. All staff and young people are given fire safety instructions and there is a good awareness of fire safety in the home. Fire drills are

carried out regularly and detailed records are kept. Maintenance support is easily accessible should an issue be identified.

Staff recruitment practices are very robust. The home has established careful selection and vetting of all new staff to ensure the protection of young people. New staff do not commence employment in the home until all the relevant checks have been carried out.

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.