

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Deirdra Keating
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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 children's home provides care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, aged between eight and 17 years and is owned by a registered charity.

The home is a detached property with communal areas. It is situated in a town close to local amenities and public transport links. Each young person has their own bedroom and a number of communal areas are provided for recreational activities. Separate facilities are provided for staff, together with a meeting room and office space.

The ground floor comprises a lounge, dining room, kitchen, activity room and cloakroom. Four young people currently live in the home of which three were present during the inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

At this unannounced interim inspection staying safe was inspected. The inspection also looked at the progress the setting has made since the last inspection. These related to staff qualifications and documentation. The provision has taken appropriate action to resolve previous requirements.

Improvements since the last inspection

The Registered Manager was asked to ensure that the home's insurance certificate specified the name and address of the home. This has been requested by the home who are awaiting a new certificate. The Registered Manager was also asked to ensure that 80% of the staff are qualified to a National Vocational Qualification at level 3. This requirement continues to be addressed, with four staff nearing the completion of their training.

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.

The staff respect young people's confidentiality and privacy well. Young people have keys to their bedrooms and staff always knock and gain permission before opening bedroom doors. Young people respect each other when sharing the communal bathroom. Good personal boundaries and routines ensure that young people know who is using the bathroom and when it will be free. Staff support young people very well in the home. High levels of staff supervision and presence has contributed to a peaceful and harmonious atmosphere in which young people respect staff and one another. The staff work hard to provide consistent boundaries and meaningful consequences for behavioural incidents. This has led to a homely, caring environment where young people clearly feel safe and secure. Related sanctions are used but staff take a restorative approach allowing young people the chance to help with extra household chores and earn these back. Staff positively reinforce desirable behaviour and take time to reflect on their own practice about how best to support each young person. The staff and young people in the house have written positive affirmations about one another. These summarise the unique characteristics and strengths of each person in the home and are displayed in the lounge. This helps young people focus on their strengths, improve their self-esteem and understand that their differences are equally valued.

Regular training and supervision provide guidance and support for staff in reinforcing positive behaviour and this is documented in individual behaviour management plans. While the support is good, the behaviour management plans are dated but lack detail. This could potentially impact on the support given to young people. This is a calm home where staff rarely have to physically intervene and there are few instances of bullying. The atmosphere is peaceful where young people adhere well to boundaries that are unanimously agreed and subsequently young people feel safe and relaxed at the home.

There are clear child protection guidelines in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Staff know how to respond to allegations or suspicion of abuse because they attend mandatory training that is refreshed every two years. Staff are all encouraged to reflect on their practice and that of colleagues and this helps keep young people safe. Young people who go missing from care are given extra support by staff who look for triggers and explain the dangers of absconding to young people. This is recorded along with all the details of the absence including young people's comments. This keeps young people as safe as possible if they leave the home without permission.

The home has good procedures for helping young people make a complaint. Each young person has a separate complaint file to maintain their confidentiality. The information for making complaints is displayed in the home although there have been no complaints for some time. Daily grumbles and household issues are raised in community meetings; these help bring issues out into the open. Young people are all involved and also attend staff meetings. This shows how staff value young people's

opinions and incorporate their views in making decisions.

Steps are generally taken to keep young people, staff and visitors safe from hazards and fire. Emergency lighting and alarm checks are carried out weekly and recorded. Electrical appliances and heating equipment are regularly checked and certified as safe. Fire drills are carried out, however, these do not occur with enough regularity to meet the requirements and this could potentially impact on young people's safety. The home is secure and visitors to the home monitored carefully. All staff are recruited using careful checking systems that are documented. This ensures that Criminal Record Bureau checks and written references are always gained prior to employment starting. In addition, regular bank staff are used to cover any staff absences. This provides good continuity of care and ensures young people are cared for by safe and suitable staff.

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.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Recommendations

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

- update and review behaviour management plans to provide clear guidance for

staff (NMS 22.2)

- ensure that at least four fire drills, including evacuation of staff and children from the building take place in a 12 month period, and are recorded. (NMS 26.8)