

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	7 August 2009
Inspector	Sharon Lewis
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	16 March 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

The home was initially registered on 19 January 2006. The home currently provides accommodation and care to young people of mixed genders aged between 12 and 18 years old with learning disabilities. This includes providing a service for young people on the autistic spectrum. The home is registered for up to a maximum of six young people. At the time of this inspection, two young people were enjoying a respite break. Due to the nature of their disability they were unable to verbalise their satisfaction with the home. It was observed that they were comfortable in their surroundings and interacted positively with staff.

The home is spread across two floors, with young people's bedrooms located on the first floor. The bedrooms are appropriately furnished. Young people have access to two lounges, a sensory room, a timeout room and an activity room. There is a garden with a patio area and a large trampoline. The home is situated within walking distance of local shops and is served well by transport networks.

Summary

This interim unannounced inspection looked at the progress the setting has made with the actions and recommendations made at the last inspection. Being healthy, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution and economic wellbeing were not looked at during this inspection. At the last inspection all these outcome areas were judged to be good. The home has complied with all previous requirements. Young people benefit from a greatly improved service. Staff have worked extremely hard to provide an environment which enhances the wellbeing of young people. There are no actions from this inspection. One recommendation is made to formalise the service development plan.

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 the home was required to address two actions. These related to monitoring the quality of the service being provided. The home has a more robust quality assurance system. Unannounced monthly visits are undertaken by another manager within the organisation. The structure of visits includes auditing records, outlined in regulations. In addition, to making recommendations which contribute towards improving the overall service.

There were also three recommendations made to improve practice. These were concerning record keeping. Fire safety records are now more detailed. The new format enables staff to record all persons involved in each drill. The home does not record the meetings with senior staff, as these are held daily. Minutes are, however, kept of the general team meetings. Young people's files now contain a photograph of them, to assist with identification.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

The last inspection demonstrated that young people receive good outcomes in this area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people benefit from good outcomes in relation to their safety. The home's practices appropriately respects young people's privacy. Part of the home's philosophy is to additionally help young people develop and maintain self-respect. Documentation also addresses the need to uphold each young person's dignity. Policies ensure staff confidentially manage young people's person information. There is secure lockable storage for young people's files within the manager's office.

The home has a comprehensive complaints procedure. On admission young people receive an information booklet specific to their preferred form of communication. This booklet outlines the process for making a complaint. Staff closely monitor young people's mood and are able to identify if they are in any distress. Since the last inspection there has been no complaints. Instead the home has received several compliments. Compliments confirm the satisfaction of involved professionals.

Young people receive the necessary protection from the home's safeguarding procedures. Staff receive child protection training. The home has their own policy, staff can additionally refer to the London wide procedure. There has not been any safeguarding concerns since the last inspection. Parents highlight their happiness and appreciation of the service. The home does not have a problem with bullying or absconding. The high staffing ratio offers young people individualised support and security. Policies, however, are in place to manage any incidents of bullying or unauthorised absences.

Young people's needs are complex and they may exhibit challenging behaviour. Staff receive training to sensitively manage young people's frustrations and aggression. The home provides a stable, consistent setting with appropriate expectations and boundaries. Staff have a good understanding of each young person's trigger points. Great care is made to diffuse potential situations. This includes engaging in alternate activities. Examples are going to the time out room or outside for a walk or a drive. Young people learn socially acceptable behaviour through good role modelling by staff. Although the home has a sanction policy, staff do not usually impose disciplinary measures. Staff receive training to appropriately restrain young people. Since the last inspection there has been one restraint, to prevent injury to another person.

Young people reside in a home which provides appropriate physical safety and security. Specific staff members take the lead on health and safety. This ensures more robust and accountable monitoring. The home has all necessary certificates, checks and risk assessments relating to health and safety. There are weekly fire alarm tests and regular fire drills. The introduction of a new fire safety format means that staff now record all involved in each drill. The home are currently recruiting new staff to enhance the existing team. The organisation has recruitment procedures which comply with regulations. The home maintains a visitors book. Staff ensure any visitor to the home receives the necessary supervision.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

The last inspection demonstrated that young people receive good outcomes in this area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is not judged.

The last inspection demonstrated that young people receive good outcomes in this area.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

The last inspection demonstrated that young people receive good outcomes in this area.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Young people receive care from an organisation which shows commitment to raising standards. Young people can now enjoy better outcomes. Considerable improvements in the environment, facilities, life skills programme, consultation and communication aids contribute to a more fulfilling break. The home has a new time out room, which has padded walls. Pictorial symbols are on display throughout the home, which aids with communication. The organisation works in close partnership with placing authorities, parents and schools. The aim being to provide holistic, individualised support, which uniquely meets each young person's needs. There is external verification of the home's improvement. This includes their recent inclusion on the Pan London residential home list.

The home is continually adapting to meet the specific need of young people. There is a good quality monitoring system which supports the cycle of continuous improvement. The Registered Manager from another home within the organisation, undertakes monthly Regulation 33 visits. The monitoring format includes the examination of all documentation, in accordance with Regulation 34. The organisation is currently recruiting staff, who have experience of working with young people with disabilities. There is also a wish to source a new manager with medical expertise. The aim being to take the service to a higher level. The future direction of the home is clear, however, a written development plan is not available.

Young people's files now contain a photograph of them. This assists with identification in the event of an emergency. Staff take pride in their work and find it very rewarding. Young people interact well with staff and show great improvements in their skills and wellbeing. Staff receive support from regular team meetings. Senior staff meet on a daily basis. Management feel it is impractical to record all outcomes from these daily meetings. The home, however, maintains a record of all general team meetings.

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 Children's 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):

- produce a written service development plan. [NMS 33.5]