

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	28 June 2010
Inspector	Sue Winson
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	12 January 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 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 children's home is a detached house in a residential area which is close to public transport links and community facilities. There are three bedrooms upstairs and one of these is used as a staff sleep-in room. Downstairs there is a lounge, kitchen, office/sleep-in room and a conservatory. It provides care and accommodation for up to two young people who are placed by their local authorities.

Summary

This unannounced interim inspection considered all key standards under the three outcome areas of being healthy, staying safe and organisation. One young person was present during the inspection.

This is a good service where the managers and staff are committed to providing individualised care and personalised support to the young people. Effective care planning and risk management focus on keeping young people safe and supporting them to manage their own behaviour. The staff team are committed to improving outcomes for young people and are well managed, trained and supported to do so. The addition of a post of deputy manager has led to strengthened auditing and monitoring systems.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The one recommendation made at the last inspection has been acted upon, and staff that are in charge of the home are permanent staff that have completed their induction and probationary periods. This is a result of the home being fully staffed and the team function as a cohesive group. The physical environment which has been considerably refurbished reflects the ability of the staff to work co-operatively to make improvements. One young person commented that it now "looks more like a home than a children's home".

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young people enjoy a healthy diet and are encouraged to be involved in planning meals, shopping and cooking. Staff assist young people in preparing meals and snacks and are trained in food hygiene. They promote healthy lifestyles and encourage and support young people to take regular exercise.

Young people's health needs are identified and the home can demonstrate that they receive services to meet their needs. Comprehensive health plans are compiled which include specific strategies for meeting physical and emotional needs. Full information is requested from placing social workers with varying degrees of success; however, the home has obtained details of immunisations and childhood illnesses through the local looked after children nurse, who visits to talk about health issues with the young people. Young people are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians and have access to specialist health services. Staff receive training and consultation with a therapist to enable them to meet young people's specific needs. They are

knowledgeable about local resources, inform young people and encourage and support them to access services. Healthy living is continuously promoted through individual work.

Young people are safeguarded by the home's policies and practices for the administration of medication. Staff are trained, medication is safely stored and regular stock checks take place.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people's privacy is respected. They are able to see visitors, have conversations with staff and make telephone calls in private. Suitable arrangements are in place when there is a need to search young people's rooms and they are informed. Confidential information is safely and securely stored.

Policies, procedures and practices in respect of complaints, safeguarding, bullying and absence without authority serve to protect the young people. Young people know of a range of people they can complain to, and forms are available to them. Complaints from outside of the home have been appropriately dealt with and the Registered Manager has worked successfully to form and maintain positive relationships with neighbours, following a complaint. Recent compliments have been received from them. Young people's welfare is promoted, they are reminded about safety issues regularly and any concerns are notified to the relevant authorities. Staff are alert to the potential for bullying, address incidents as they arise and inform young people of their rights. The home has been successful in reducing incidents of absence without authority, through strategies outlined in individual risk assessments.

Positive behaviour management supports and encourages young people to take responsibility for their own behaviour. They earn extra money through a reward system which identifies a small number of achievable goals, based on individual needs. There has been no use of restraint since the last inspection and the few sanctions are appropriate. Staff are trained, and receive updates, in behaviour management to inform their practice. They focus on maintaining clear boundaries and expectations, and give examples where young people have responded well to this approach. Young people were positive about their relationships with staff who they described as fair and consistent.

The home provides physical safety and security. Electrical, gas and fire checks have been carried out and young people have the opportunity to practice leaving the building on fire drills. A wide range of risk assessments have been compiled which inform effective risk management planning. Any urgent repairs are carried out in a timely manner. Robust recruitment procedures also serve to protect the young people

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 good.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Young people receive individualised care and are involved in planning and decision making. Staff receive training and respecting difference is actively promoted. Consideration of equality and diversity permeates practice. Equality of opportunity is promoted. The make up of the staff team reflects the wider society.

The home's Statement of Purpose provides clear information on the services provided and how the home operates. Young people have their own guide in addition.

There is sufficient staff with the experience and skills to meet the need of the young people. They are well supported in their work. The staff team is now more stable and consequently only a small number of bank staff now work in the home. These are known to the young people, receive supervision and are increasingly given opportunities to attend training. The permanent staff team are providing consistency of care under the leadership of the manager and deputy, who they describe as accessible and approachable. Effective communication, time for reflection on practice and involvement in the improvement agenda benefits the young people. Formal supervision and team meetings allow for discussion about young people and for any issues to be addressed. Staff training is well established and they are keen to increase their skills and are positive about the range and quality of available training.

The Registered Manager and deputy, who have responsibility for three homes, provide effective leadership and thorough auditing and monitoring of practice. Comprehensive reports provided by the Regulation 33 visitor include action planning to monitor any shortfalls. The manager ensures that these are discussed in team meetings and acted upon in a timely manner. Young people's files are well organised and reflect their progress.

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

There are no recommendations.