

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	David Morgan
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Date of last inspection	19/08/2010
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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

The home provides an assessment service for one particular local authority and cares for children and young people between the ages of eight and 16 years on admission who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. Following the assessment period, young people move to other placements such as their families; other longer term residential placements or independence.

The home is a four-bedded service in a detached residential property that is indistinguishable from its neighbours. The ground floor comprises of a lounge, dining room, kitchen, staff office and toilet. The first floor has three bedrooms for children, a bathroom and a staff sleeping-in room. There is also a large rear garden. Currently three young people are living here, two of whom contributed directly to the inspection.

The home is situated among similar properties and is within walking distance of local amenities. There are bus routes nearby to the city and surrounding areas.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This unannounced interim inspection finds that the quality rating remains outstanding. The inspection only considers the recommendation from last time, which has been addressed. All areas of care continue to be addressed to a particularly high standard with only one recommendation being made to improve night-time fire safety measures. Young people benefit from a comfortable and homely environment in which they feel safe and are able to lead enjoyable and fulfilling lives.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection made one recommendation. This has been addressed and a satisfactory written development plan is now in place. Developmental work is underway by the manager to ensure that sources of information such as the stakeholder surveys contribute to such plans.

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.

The home is particularly successful in keeping young people safe and ensures their privacy is fully respected. There are clear procedures that are followed carefully and serve to provide a physically safe environment. Fire drills, for example, ensure that staff and young people are kept safe by being familiar with the evacuation procedures. High standards are represented by the use of a variety of drill scenarios, which ensures that evacuations are treated seriously. However, there are insufficient drills at night time. This shortfall has a relatively minor impact on young people but is a gap in staff training. Safeguarding standards are also maintained by comprehensive steps to recruit new staff; effectiveness in this regard is reflected in high levels of staff competence.

The welfare of young people is fully promoted through effective training of staff and their understanding of safeguarding procedures. This means, for example, that incidents of bullying and being absent without authority are especially well controlled and kept to an absolute minimum. Similarly, strong behaviour management systems concentrate on rewarding positive behaviour and successfully avoid negative behaviour escalating to the point that physical interventions are necessary. Young people are thoroughly engaged in a high profile system of rewards that reflects their success in achieving individualised targets. This positive and productive approach is shown in the pleasant atmosphere in the home and between staff and young people.

Young people themselves feel that the behaviour management procedures are applied fairly and they always have ample opportunities to discuss events afterwards. Records provide space for written comments by young people, which they use. This is another example of the high level of consultation that is afforded to young people and which contributes to the excellent standards of care. In addition, young people are fully familiar with the complaints procedure and the variety of ways in which it can be triggered. The management and recording of complaints is of a high standard with close attention to detail, including, for example, age-appropriate letters to young people and chronologies of the actions taken. These measures help to ensure that young people feel confident that the organisation takes their concerns seriously.

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):

- ensure that at least four fire drills take place in a 12 month period, including at night. (NMS 26.8)