

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Liz Driver
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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

A private company owns and operates this setting. The home accommodates one young person at a time who has emotional and behavioural difficulties aged between 11 and 17 years of age.

The premises are an end of terrace house situated close to the town centre. The ground floor comprises a lounge, a dining room and a kitchen. There is a small yard to the rear. The first floor comprises three bedrooms, one for the use of the young person and two for staff who perform 'sleeping-in' duties. One of the bedrooms doubles as an office.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This very short notice interim inspection looked at the progress the setting has made with the actions and recommendations made at the last inspection. The provision has taken appropriate action to resolve the two actions and one recommendation. This inspection also looked at staying safe and part of economic well-being.

Overall the setting continues to operate to a very good standard. Much work is carried out to promote positive behaviours and in keeping young people safe. Staff continue to be positive, even during the difficult times young people may be experiencing, and fully support young people. Sound policies and procedures and staff practice enable young people to receive consistency of care.

One recommendation has been made as a result of room search records not being located during the inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to submit an application for a Registered Manager. This has been addressed with the current manager having successfully completed the registration process. The setting was also asked to ensure all incidents listed in Schedule 5 of the Children's Homes Regulations are notified to the appropriate agencies without delay. The manager has addressed this with notifications being submitted as appropriate.

One recommendation was made at the last inspection; to ensure formal leaving care plans are in place for young people. Despite difficulty gaining them from placing social workers the setting now has formal plans in place.

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.

Young people's privacy continues to be respected with confidential information stored securely and handled sensitively. There is a policy in place with regards to searching a young person's room, however, no records could be found during this inspection of searches undertaken.

There have been no complaints made about the setting since the last inspection. The right of a young person to complain about their care in the home is made clear to them on their admission to the home. The young person's handbook gives clear guidance to the young people about who they can complain to and their contact details. Staff receive training in complaints and whistle blowing.

Young people are cared for by staff who receive appropriate training in safeguarding, including the home's and local authority's protocols in identifying and responding to child protection concerns or incidents. There is a child protection policy in place for the staff to follow and they have a copy of the local safeguarding procedures in the office to which they can refer. No referrals have been made since the last inspection. Much work has taken place to empower young people to keep themselves safe when out in the community.

The home has a very clear policy in place with regards to managing bullying. Behavioural expectations are made clear to the young people when they are admitted to the home and the policy emphasises that there is no tolerance of bullying behaviour. No incidents of bullying were heard of during the inspection.

The home has a clear policy in place for the staff to follow in the event that a young person goes missing. Young people's care plans clearly state what course of action will be pursued should the young person leave the home without permission or not return to the home at the agreed time. The setting works hard with other agencies to lessen the risk for young people if they go missing and to ensure consistent strategies are in place for all agencies involved. Staff do try to engage young people in reflective behaviours on their return, however, current young people find this difficult.

Young people have a behaviour management plan in place which outlines what support they need to achieve positive behaviour. Triggers for distressed or challenging behaviour are recorded in young people's behaviour management plan. Sanctions are clearly stated in the company's policy with permissible and non permissible sanctions identified. Records show minimal sanctions imposed that are

appropriate and fair.

All members of staff receive training in the method of restraint chosen by the organisation which owns the home. There have been no recorded incidents of restraint in the home since 2006.

The manager ensures that any risk assessments related to the premises, activities or young people are updated and reviewed regularly. The home has up to date checks carried out on electric, gas and fire safety systems. Additionally, there are regular fire drills. Internal checks are also carried out on a weekly basis by members of staff to check the fire alarms, smoke detectors, emergency lighting and fire extinguishers. Records show checks are of a very good standard.

The organisation operates a robust recruitment process which ensures that all members of staff have the correct checks made on them before commencing work. All visitors are vetted, supervised if appropriate and asked to sign the visitor's book. The organisation is up to date with changes in legislation specifically relating to the introduction of the new Equalities Act.

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 good.

Young people live in a setting that provides a good standard of accommodation. Suitable toilet and bathing facilities are provided. Young people can personalise their bedrooms and are given a key to their room if they wish. There is sufficient communal space for the young people. There is clear evidence of ongoing repair such as replacing the front door. The manager proactively addresses maintenance issues. A tour of the home did not evidence any health or safety concerns.

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 room searches are documented and made available for inspection purposes (NMS9.8).