

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC066393
Inspection date	4 March 2010
Inspector	Jacqui Gosling
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	4 November 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 is one of a group of homes operated by the same organisation as part of a tendering contract with a local council. Accommodation is provided for three young people between the ages of 12 and 16. Placements are long term.

The home is a three-bedded unit in a large converted semi-detached residential property. The ground floor comprises of a lounge, dining room, kitchen, conservatory, staff office and toilet. There is a medium sized rear garden. The first floor has three bedrooms for children, a bathroom and a staff sleeping-in room.

The home is situated within walking distance of local shops. There are local bus routes to allow easy access to nearest city and surrounding areas.

Summary

This was an unannounced interim inspection that looked at the outcomes under the staying safe and the previous recommendations. Three young people are currently living here but they did not participate in the inspection as they were all at school.

Young people are clearly benefiting from a service that has an outstanding focus on safeguarding and protection matters. Operational policies, procedures and staff guidance are used effectively to promote everybody's safety and welfare. Young people are frequently and consistently engaged by staff in how to keep themselves and others safe. Young people benefit from living in a home where there are excellent arrangements in place to ensure staff are trained and well informed about effective safeguarding practices.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Six recommendations were made following the last inspection that took place in November 2009.

The home now ensures all doors designated as fire doors open without use of a key. The required evacuation of staff and young people from the building during the night has now taken place for this year.

The staff have been proactive in requesting that local authority social workers ensure all young person have up to date personal education plans. Some social workers have not yet arranged these meetings but the recommendation is removed as it is not within the remit of the staff to take this matter any further.

The recommendation to ensure both the needs of the young person concerned and the likely effects of their admission upon the existing group of residents are taken into account and recorded in decisions on admission to the home is removed as there have been no new admissions to the home but will be re-visited following any new admission.

The staff have been proactive in contacting placing authorities to request statutory reviews when due for any young person, if they do not arrange or delay the review.

The organisation has now arranged training to ensure staff have the skills required to meet the needs of the young people, specifically young people who have autism

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 has very effective policies, procedures and care practices, which ensure that young people are cared for safely. For example, robust individual risk assessments and support plans ensure that staff have appropriate strategies in place to protect young people. Young people are protected from abuse because staff are properly trained and have a good understanding of the home's procedures for reporting and managing safeguarding concerns.

To protect young people from bullying staff supervise them appropriately in the home; they encourage young people to understand the impact of bullying on individuals and they are to talk in planned placement meetings or individual key working sessions about any difficulties there may be between them.

The privacy and confidentiality of young people is properly respected. Young people have individual bedrooms, where they can be private and keep their possessions safe. There is a telephone that they can use in private.

Complaints are managed very well. There is a very clear complaints procedure which is made known to young people when they come to live in the home. Young people understand how to make a formal complaint and the records clearly show that they feel confident about letting staff know if they are unhappy with any aspect of their care as they often choose to informally raise 'grumbles' rather than make formal complaints. In addition, young people have access to an independent advocacy service.

There is a robust protocol for managing unauthorised absences to keep young people safe. Staff encourage young people to let them know where they will be when they leave the home and keep in touch with them by phone if they are away. Individual risk assessments identify the specific issues in relation to unauthorised absences, which staff need to consider. If a young person goes missing, staff work closely with police and other agencies, to ensure the safe return of the young person to the home.

There is a strong emphasis in the home on recognising and rewarding positive behaviour and effort. Staff develop positive relationships with young people and help them to learn to manage their own behaviour in a way that is socially acceptable. Staff are trained to manage challenging behaviour, including the use of restraints. There have been few incidents of physical restraint in the home since the last inspection, which indicates that staff are successful in the positive way that they work with young people.

The management of health and safety processes is excellent, which helps to protect young people from the risk of harm or injury in the home. Equipment and installations are serviced

regularly and there are regular fire safety tests. Young people take part in evacuation drills, so that they understand what to do in the event of a fire or other emergency. Risk assessments on the environment and on activities that young people may be involved in, are robust and are regularly reviewed to make sure that information is up to date. All visitors to the home are shown the fire exits. This is good practice.

There are effective procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff. They ensure that all staff are thoroughly vetted before they start work. The identity of all visitors to the home is checked before they are allowed in. These robust systems protect young people, as they ensure that unauthorised individuals are not able to gain access to the home.

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?

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.