

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	4 February 2010
Inspector	Debbie Foster
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	8 October 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

This children's home provides a responsive residential respite care service for young people with severe learning disabilities, some of whom have complex and challenging behaviours. A shared care service is also available. In an emergency, they provide short-term residential care to young people whose families require support. Young people continue to attend school for education during their stay.

The home provides individual bedrooms for young people. Facilities in the home also include two lounges, a dining room, ball pool, sensory room and computer room. There is a large outside and garden area. Parking facilities are available.

Summary

This was an unannounced interim inspection focusing on national minimum standards relating to keeping young people safe. The four recommendations made at the last inspection in October 2009 were also checked to see if they had been implemented.

Good safeguarding measures are in place to support young people and ensure they are kept safe. This has been achieved through individual safety measures being put in place and staff being well trained in areas of safeguarding.

The staff group work well as a team and have good knowledge and relationships with all the young people. Acceptable behaviour is actively promoted within the home.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The following recommendations have been implemented.

The home has taken action to ensure the floor coverings and seals in shower and bathrooms are in good order. Staff have continued to build on varying methods of consultation with the young people.

The following recommendations are still to be implemented.

All relevant education targets are to be incorporated into care plans where appropriate. The behaviour strategies used are to be recorded in detail within care plans for young people where required. The implementation of these recommendations have commenced since the last inspection. A large number of young people use the service. Therefore, it is acknowledged that implementation will take time to achieve.

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.

Staff speak to young people with respect, asking what they would like to do, eat for tea and within general conversation showing they value children's rights to make decisions. Young people's privacy is respected, they have their own rooms and they can choose to spend time alone. Staff knock on bedroom doors before entering. Staff are clear on their responsibility within the home's policy and procedures to keep information confidential. The records are stored securely. Therefore, young people's privacy is respected.

Staff suitably demonstrate their responsibilities to protect young people from harm and they promote each young person's welfare well.

The home has a clear policy and procedure on how to make a complaint. The staff, parents and some young people are aware of how to make a complaint. Staff support young people to make complaints. There have been no complaints made at the home since the last inspection. Complaints made previously, show that prompt action has been taken and the full outcome for the complaint is recorded. Any concerns raised are taken seriously.

Safeguarding procedures are detailed and available for staff to refer to electronically and use. All staff have received safeguarding training and are aware of the procedures. There have been no safeguarding concerns at the service since the last inspection. Therefore, measures are in place to keep young people safe and to promote their welfare.

Young people are protected from bullying through the home's policies, procedures and the practice of the staff. There is a child friendly anti-bullying policy that has been developed by the young people. Staff have taken action to address current low level bullying incidents. Discussions have taken place with young people, giving clarity on unacceptable behaviour. High staffing levels allow staff to closely supervise young people which ensures any such incidents are diverted or stopped immediately.

Keeping young people safe is a priority. Staff are aware of the policy and procedure to follow if young people go missing. There have been no such incidents since the last inspection. Young people's files contain relevant information to assist if such an incident occurs.

Managing behaviour positively is a high priority in the home and it is promoted and encouraged consistently by the staff team. The staff approach to caring for young people is to have boundaries that positively reinforce good behaviour.

Sanctions are only given to young people appropriate to their age and understanding. These have been agreed with parents. There have been no sanctions given to young people since the last inspection. Staff receive training in safe care and control, which includes safe physical intervention methods. The staff rarely restrain young people and it is only used as a last resort, which is best practice. There has been one low level incident since the last inspection.

Behaviour strategies are used for individual young people and these are recorded within care plans. Since the last inspection staff have commenced reviewing and updating these documents. Those completed clearly set out in good detail the strategies staff are to use to support each young person's behaviour. Staff are currently still completing this area of work.

Physical safety and security are a priority. For example, risk assessments are in place for young people. These cover the relevant areas in specific detail and the supporting safety measures to be implemented with young people to keep them safe. These are regularly reviewed and updated.

Fire records indicate that regular checks on the system and appropriate fire instruction and training have taken place. Fire drills are conducted on a regular basis and involve the young people and staff.

Additional health and safety areas within the home are monitored on a regular basis to ensure appropriate measures are in place to keep young people safe. Therefore, young people's safety is enhanced through the practices and support from staff.

The recruitment files have not been checked on this inspection. These were checked at the last key inspection in October 2009. The files contained all the required information and relevant checks on care staff, including Criminal Record Bureau checks, references and full employment histories. The files are audited annually by the manager to ensure any omissions are identified and addressed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff view the education of the young people with importance. All young people attend school on a full time basis and this assists them in attaining their educational potential. There is regular communication with the schools and staff attend educational reviews. Each young person has a personal education plan (PEP) that identifies their needs. Since the last inspection, staff have requested up to date education targets for each young person. A number have been provided by schools, whilst some are still to be received. Staff are working to incorporate the relevant targets into individual care plans. Although this work is not yet complete, progress continues to be made in this area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young people enjoy positive relationships and good communication with the staff. They are involved in decision-making and they are provided with opportunities to make positive contributions to their own lives. They decide about the meals and food they eat, activities and plans for their future. Since the last inspection, three young people's meetings have taken place to build on involvement in communication and decision making actively.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The home provides a positive environment for young people. It is decorated and furnished to a good standard with a number of spacious communal rooms for the young people to use. Additional to lounges and dining areas, there is a computer room, ball pool and sensory room. There are good outside facilities for play and recreation. The home is clean and tidy. There are good repair and maintenance programmes in place. Since the last inspection, the flooring and seals in a shower and bathroom have received a deep clean and are now in a satisfactory condition.

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

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure relevant education targets are incorporated into care plans where appropriate (NMS 14)
- ensure clear written behaviour strategies are in place for young people where required. (NMS 2 and 22)