

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Chris Scully
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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

This service is a children's home that offers a long-term, therapeutic placement for up to two young people aged between 10 years and 17 years on admission, who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The premises are located on the outskirts of a large town and consist of a detached farm house, domestic in appearance and within walking distance of some local amenities. The home has two vehicles for transporting the young people to other areas, so that they can access a range of recreation and leisure facilities and other amenities. Staffing levels can be adjusted to match the individual needs of the young people. Night time supervision is determined by levels of need and risk.

This service has its own school, which the young people can access as part of their educational programme. Older students are provided with individual programmes that may include part education and part-work experience. The young people are able to engage in therapy that is provided by the responsible individual who has postgraduate qualifications in cognitive behaviour therapy.

There were two young people living at the home at the time of this visit.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

At this unannounced interim inspection all of the key standards in staying safe were inspected. All other key standards were inspected at the key inspection in December 2010, when all areas were deemed as good, with enjoying and achieving as outstanding. This interim inspection also focussed on how the home addressed the actions and recommendations from the previous inspection.

This is a good service. Young people enjoy a relaxed homely environment and have a positive relationship with the staff. Staff are knowledgeable about the young people, their behaviours and vulnerabilities and plan accordingly. This means young people are kept safe. Good procedures are in place to ensure young people are safeguarded and protected within the home and in the community. Staff continue to plan effectively to ensure young people's individual needs are met. No young people were present during the inspection as they were in educational placements and had various appointments after this.

There are no actions or recommendations from this inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection one action and three recommendations were raised. The action related to the storage and recording of administered medication. A revised system has been implemented, which makes the recording of medication clearer as to the actual dose administered. Also monitoring systems have been implemented to check the amount of medication on site.

The three recommendations related to young people's choices on how to spend their pocket money, staff supervisions and the recording of restraints. Young people have been reimbursed with the monies for the car wash and are encouraged to spend their money on items for themselves. Improved systems for staff supervision mean staff receive one and a half hours' supervision a month and all new staff have fortnightly supervisions. There have been no restraints since the last inspection. However, the Registered Manager has spoken to staff regarding the recording of any restraint to ensure all required information would be logged.

The home's response to these issues has improved upon young people's choice and independence and the organisation of the home.

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 is respected and information is handled confidentially. Young people's records are stored securely in the office. All young people have single bedrooms, which they are able to lock and are highly personalised. Staff always knock before entering a young person's bedroom.

Young people benefit from an effective process for the recording and investigation of any complaints. There have been no complaints made by young people since the last inspection. Young people state that they know who to talk to should they have any concerns. Effective safeguarding procedures means young people are kept safe. Staff recognises the vulnerability of the young people they look after. As a result, they are extremely vigilant in the observations of their behaviour and environment. Staff are trained in safeguarding procedures, which means they are able to act quickly relating to any concerns about a young person's well-being. Staff talk to the young people about how they are feeling when away from the home. This means they are able to remove them from stressful situations. Young people at the home do not display bullying behaviours, although they do 'bicker' with one another. Staff are aware of the potential for this and minimise this by discussing strategies with young people on how to keep themselves safe.

Young people going missing is not an issue at this time. Clear reporting systems are in place should this occur, to ensure all required persons are informed to ensure the young person's swift return. Young people benefit from a calm, consistent approach to behaviour management. This results in the minimal use of physical intervention. Records of restraint are maintained appropriately. Staff are very aware of the young people's individual behaviours and vulnerabilities. They work with young people to develop coping strategies to manage their feelings. This is supported by the comprehensive risk assessments and behaviour management plans in place for each young person. The use of positive sanctions continues to have a positive impact on young people's behaviour. Young people thank staff for the additional rewards and use this towards various activities. Similarly, young people are able to reflect upon the consequences of their actions, such as damaging property, and comment that they are disappointed in themselves. This process enables young people to take responsibility for their actions and consider what is socially-acceptable behaviour.

Young people are protected by effective health and safety procedures, which are monitored by the Registered Manager and staff. Detailed risk assessments are in place for each young person, which enable staff to reduce or eliminate potential risks. Risk assessments are updated regularly to reflect the ongoing changes to the needs of young people. Fire, electrical and gas equipment continue to be checked to ensure they are in full working order. Regular fire drills mean young people and staff know how to evacuate the premises quickly in an emergency.

Effective procedures are in place to ensure staff are checked thoroughly. Visitors to the home are vetted and monitored closely during their visit to ensure the safety of 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 not judged.