

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Joanna Heller
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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 registered children's home for up to seven young people aged 11 to 18 years with emotional and behavioural difficulties. This is one of two homes owned by the company, both of which are in short walking distance of each other. The home is situated in a residential street within short walking distance of the local town centre with its amenities and transport links. Each young person has their own lockable bedroom which they are able to personalise. At the time of the inspection seven young people were living in the home and one took part in the inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection carried out as part of the annual inspection program. All key standards in staying safe were reviewed as well as selected standards in being healthy and economic well-being. In addition, progress on any actions and recommendations made at the last inspection were reviewed.

This service is graded as good. Staff and young people enjoy sound relationships based upon mutual respect and young people say they feel safe and well cared for. Feedback from placing authorities is very positive. Young people are safeguarded from unsuitable people gaining employment in the home through robust vetting practices.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the manager was asked to ensure that detailed records are maintained of the care provided to young people in particular in relation to medication and accidents. The manager now ensures that records are clearly maintained of any accidents and any medication given.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The home has safe systems in place for the storage and administration of medication. Staff are trained in managing medication. Clear records are held of medication coming into and leaving the home. Clear records are maintained of medication given, but not always of when and why prescribed medicines are not administered or are refused.

Young people benefit from a variety of nutritious home cooked foods which reflect people's choices and cultural heritage. Young people are able to help themselves to healthy snacks and are encouraged to be involved in shopping and preparing meals.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff are trained in safeguarding young people and are aware what to do should an allegation of a child protection nature be made. Training is updated on yearly basis ensuring staff keep up to date with current practice. Young people say they feel safe and well cared for in the home. Young people say that staff talk to them about keeping themselves safe. Risk assessments are in place for young people which identify their vulnerability and any risks they may pose to others. Activity based risk assessments are also in place.

Staff enjoy positive relationships with young people based upon mutual respect. Staff focus on rewarding good behaviour and clear reward systems are in place. The home is working towards developing a unit based on therapeutic principles of working with young people to manage behaviour. Young people say that they are able to easily talk to staff and feel the rules are fair. Staff have had training in control and restraint and are clear as to the circumstances in which it is appropriate to be used. No restraints have taken place since the last inspection.

The home is able to demonstrate that complaints are effectively responded to, investigated and managed. Young people know how to complain and have confidence in the ability of staff to respond to any issues of concern which they may raise. Staff and management are proactive in identifying and addressing any behaviour which could be construed as bullying swiftly. Young people report that there they feel safe and any issues such as personal theft are responded to appropriately. Young people who go missing are notified to the appropriate agencies in line with local guidelines.

Young people are safeguarded from unsuitable people gaining employment in the home through robust vetting practices. No staff are employed until checks on their suitability are completed.

Management ensure that regular checks on the building take place to ensure a safe living and working environment. Fire precautionary arrangements in the home ensure young people and staff are safeguarded from fire in line with current good practice. However, no night time fire drill has taken place in the past twelve months. Young people are encouraged to clean their own rooms and have access to cleaning chemicals when doing this. All young people are of an age and level of understanding to use these products safely. However, no risk assessments are in place which identify any issues of vulnerability and any risks they may pose to others specifically in relation to cleaning materials have been considered.

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 enjoy a clean, spacious, well maintained and decorated home and are proud of the house they live in. Each young person has their own lockable bedroom, which they are able to personalise. The kitchen/diner and linked areas have been opened out and refitted giving a spacious family room and chill out areas. This area has become the hub of activity in the home. Young people have been consulted about recent decorative changes and further pictures have been placed about the home to reflect the diversity of the young people. Accommodation is set out over three floors. Sufficient bathrooms and toilets are provided to meet the young people's needs and ensure privacy. Young people say they like the house.

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 all parts of the home are free from hazards to their safety; in particular, ensure risk assessments for the use of cleaning chemicals by young people are in place, ensure a fire drill is conducted at night at least once in every 12 month period (NMS 26)
- ensure a record is maintained of when and why prescribed medicines are not administered or are refused (NMS 13.1)