

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC067839
Inspection date	21/03/2011
Inspector	Jacqui Gosling
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	02/11/2010
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2011

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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 children's home offers a therapeutic placement for up to two young people aged six to 17 years who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Currently, two young people live here.

The home is on three floors; the ground floor consists of a large communal lounge, kitchen, utility room, staff office/sleep-in room, toilet and a conservatory dining room. The young people are provided with their own bedrooms which are located on the first floor along with a bathroom and staff sleep-in room. An activity/classroom is located in the attic space on the second floor.

The house is set in its own grounds which comprise a hard standing area to the front of the building and garden area to the rear.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection. The findings from this inspection are supported by the full inspection completed in November 2010. The judgement for all outcome areas during that visit was good.

This inspection considers the progress the home has made in implementing the recommendations made during the key inspection and revisits the key standards under the staying safe outcome area. One young person was present but declined to participate in the inspection.

Staff work hard to promote good relationships between themselves and the young people and are committed to supporting them.

Five recommendations have been made. Some written records are not sufficiently robust and risk assessments lack detail about the current behaviours of the young people and the strategies staff use to assist them to manage these behaviours. The monitoring of visitors is not sufficiently robust.

The overall judgement is satisfactory.

Improvements since the last inspection

Three recommendations were made during the last inspection that took place in November, 2010.

Staff have now requested the official record of statutory review decisions and recommendations from the local authorities, so they can be retained on each young person's file. The paperwork has been obtained for some of the young people but remains outstanding for others. However, staff could make their own record of the decisions and recommendations when they attend statutory reviews, in order to ensure young people's care plans are up to date. Therefore, the recommendation remains partially unmet and is restated.

Formal pathway plans, for the young people who require them, are now available in the home.

The Statement of Purpose has recently been reviewed and now accurately describes what services young people can expect from living at the home, including information about the members of staff working at the home, their qualifications or experience.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The home has clear procedures and staff guidance in place that is communicated appropriately to promote practices that keep young people safe. Staff receive regular training in a range of areas to do with safeguarding young people, which helps them fulfil their role and responsibilities. But some areas of practice are not sufficiently robust.

Staff are aware of their responsibilities to promote privacy and confidentiality. They do not enter young people's rooms without permission. Although, no room search have been required since the home was registered, the home has a clear procedures for recording such incidents. Information held in respect of young people is stored in lockable facilities, which are only accessible to staff. Staff are professional about sharing confidential information.

Records show young people understand how to make a complaint if they have any concerns about their care. Information regarding making a complaint is included in the children's guide. The home has in place an effective system to respond to and investigate any complaints. No complaints have been made by young people since the last inspection.

Young people live in a caring, friendly environment. Young people's welfare is protected by the staff being aware of safeguarding, anti-bullying and unauthorised absence procedures. The home has clear procedures for responding to child

protection concerns and the staff have initial training in child protection as part of their induction, then further in-house training. Staff know what action to take to keep young people safe. They are clear about the home's policy on bullying.

There is a written policy and staff guidance on the actions that should be taken if a young person is absent from the home without consent. The procedures and guidance follow protocols, which have been developed to ensure young people's safety is promoted. Staff are aware of these procedures and reporting processes are followed according to individual risks and circumstances. Only one incident records a young person as missing since the last inspection. However, the record is not fully representative of the event.

Young people are assisted to develop socially acceptable behaviour through discussions with staff on an individual basis and being provided with clear details of the home's rules and expectations of them when they are admitted to the home. A range of appropriate rewards and consequences are used to reinforce positive behaviours. These consequences are appropriate to the age of the young people but in some instances the wording does not reflect a therapeutic environment, for example, using the term 'bad behaviour' when recording consequences for actions, which the young people are then asked to sign. No physical interventions have been undertaken since the last inspection, this is a good indication of positive relationships between the young people and staff.

Young people live in a home that overall provides for their physical safety. Testing of emergency lighting, fire alarms and fire fighting equipment is taking place within appropriate timescales. Fire drills have taken place in excess of required frequency. The appropriate certificates of insurance are available in the staff office. There are appropriate environmental assessments. However, some maintenance tasks are not being recorded as tasks to be completed, nor are they undertaken promptly to ensure the environment remains safe for the young people.

There are a number of risk assessment in respect of the young people. However, some of the young people's risk assessments have not been updated to reflect current concerns about their behaviours and clearly show how staff should manage these presenting behaviours.

Staff personnel files were not available during this inspection. During the last inspection it was found that staff personnel records are well organised and overall the records show all necessary pre-employment checks are completed to ensure that permanent staff are suitable to work with vulnerable young people.

The home has appropriate procedures in place for the monitoring of visitors. However, on this occasion no one asked to see any proof of identity. This is poor practice and could potentially place the safety and welfare of the young people living here at risk.

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?

Recommendations

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

- ensure the written record of incidents of young people going missing includes all of the action taken by staff (national minimum standard 19.6)
- ensure risk assessments in relation to young people's known and likely behaviours are carried out, recorded in writing and regularly reviewed (national minimum standard 26.2)
- ensure staff comply with company policy for monitoring visitors to the home (national minimum standard 27.11)
- ensure that written records of all statutory reviews of placement plans are retained on each young person's file (NMS 3.4)
- ensure there is a satisfactory maintenance and report programme, specifically any repairs or damage is repaired promptly (national minimum standard 24.3)