

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Lindy Latreille
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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 a three-storey property in a residential area, with a basement flat that is not designated for use by the children's home. The house is situated very close to the town centre and all the local amenities are easy to access.

There is a main line rail connection, shops, cinema, sports facilities, parks and the beach within a five minute walk. Medical and dental services are available locally.

The home is registered to accommodate and care for up to three young people. The home provides short to medium term residential care for children and young people aged between eight and 17 years old on admission.

Summary

At this unannounced full inspection all key standards were inspected except Standard 27.

This is a good service. Young people's welfare is enhanced by the good relationships with staff and each other. Young people are encouraged to follow healthy lifestyles and develop independent skills to support their futures. The home works closely with a range of outside agencies to meet the young people's needs. However, full consultation did not take place with a recent health situation. The Registered Manager is focused to support staff through training. Reports on the young people reflect on the quality of their progress.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The Registered Manager has addressed the actions from the previous report. Consultation has taken place to inform risk assessment and procedures, whereby ensuring that staff sleeping in overnight are guided to best practice.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The menus demonstrate nutritionally balanced meals that have been chosen by the young people. Their choices and requests are noted at the weekly young people's meeting. They are happy with the provision and say meals are social occasions. Records show that staff are monitoring the health of the young people.

Staff ensure that all aspects of health care are addressed and appointments made and followed through. The young person's health care plan contains their individual needs; daily logs and daily assessment forms confirm positive outcomes. Staff take young people to community clinics to ensure their familiarity of service and promote confidence. There are quarterly visits from the looked after children's (LAC) nurses who advise the service on the health care plans. There is health promotion guidance given by staff and young people are made aware of health risks in smoking or substance misuse. Local community youth teams also advise.

There are links with the local child and adolescent mental health team (CAMHS) and LAC nurses. The local Connexion team works with older young people to promote healthy choices within preparation for independence. The home has two consultants who are available on an individual basis for psychotherapy. Progress in developing improved emotional outcomes is recorded and shared with placing social workers (PSW).

All requirements for medication administration are in place with secure storage and appropriate records kept. Staff have attended training on the administration of medication. Where there is refusal to take medication this is recorded and has been shared in reviews and reports to PSW. The service has not requested a health opinion from the general practitioner whilst awaiting a follow up out patient appointment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

There are no concerns raised in relation to privacy by the young people. Two staff sleep in each night. The young people can use a cordless telephone from the home or their own mobiles to make telephone calls and are facilitated by staff to do so.

There have been some complaints made since the last inspection from the young people. The young people say that they are fully aware of the procedures and staff respond to their concerns satisfactorily. Two complaint records are incomplete and without explanation.

There has been one safeguarding concern within the home. This has been appropriately managed following policy and procedures. The placing authority has been fully informed and involved; notification was made to the regulatory body. Staff are trained in safeguarding and new staff following the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) induction and later the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) qualifications. There is also a rolling staff programme in place.

Staff are proactive to identify any bullying traits and intervene as appropriate to prevent bullying and protect any victim. The young people do not raise concerns about bullying within the home and say that they are able to discuss with staff if this should occur.

There has been few occasions when young people have been absent without authority. Procedures and protocols are followed and records kept detail actions by staff. Young people returning to the home are offered appropriate services to ensure that their needs are met and a time for reflection in a key working session so that a repeat situation can be averted. Staff consider the vulnerability of each young person who goes absent and maintains regular dialogue with the PSW.

Behaviour management is well recorded. Sanctions and physical intervention records detail all requirements and the young people confirm that they believe their care to be fair. Sanctions are used and are proportionate to the misdemeanour. The young people are encouraged with appropriate boundary setting. Staff use negotiation and verbal encouragement; only using physical intervention to maintain the safety of the young person and others. There is a very low level of physical intervention used in home. Training is provided for all staff. There is evidence of quality monitoring in the home, and regulatory reports each quarter.

Fire prevention measures are in place and there are records to confirm routine safety checks and an updated fire risk assessment. The young people admitted to the home, and new staff, are instructed in fire prevention methods. Service contracts are in place for fire prevention equipment in the home. Risk assessments are in place and current. These relate to identified risks for individual young people and their activities.

There are no agency staff working at the home and all visitors are monitored. Recruitment files are retained centrally, in the neighbouring home, and will be scrutinised during a later inspection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

There is regular weekly support for the young people through key working sessions. Staff use the sessions to reflect on disruptive events. Support is consistently managed, and promotes the personal targets and goals of the care plan. There is evidence of progress for the young people, through monthly reports to PSW drafted by their key workers. Staff are knowledgeable and offer significant informal support. The young people confirm that they are able to approach any member of staff and that they feel well cared for. Some young people have Independent visitors. The young people have access to the monthly regulatory visitor and the Responsible Individual makes visits to coincide with meeting the young people. The Registered Manager arranges therapy with one of two consultants for young people who will engage. Outcomes from therapy are positive and are displayed through more mature behaviour.

All of the young people are engaged in education or training. Young people speak of a future that incorporates the understanding that qualifications are the bedrock to future success. Personal Educational Plans (PEP) are in place for the young people. Staff work closely with education providers to maximise progress and where a young person displays unacceptable behaviour staff sustain consistency in managing outcomes. The home's tutor and support worker offer a range of individualised curriculum and project work. This enables young people who are not able to attend education off site to remain and progress within education.

There is a good range of activities offered and staff plan to engage the young people in meaningful pursuits within the home or externally in community sports, youth projects and local places of interest.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Care plans are in place for all other young people and are detailed to show targets and goals that are achievable. Care is considered under Every Child Matters outcomes and link to the placing authorities' plans. Care plan are reviewed following a young person's statutory review. However there is no evidence of review on one file.

Reviews are held timely and reflect on the changing needs of each young person. The young people do attend their reviews but some find this quite challenging thinking about their future arrangements; aspects that are discussed at the review. Independent reviewing officer (IRO) encourage the young people to contribute. Staff transport placing social workers to the home, thereby facilitating the review process. Reports which identify the achievements and progress since the last review are submitted. Summary notes from reviews confirm actions to be taken and amendments needed to the plan of care.

Contact arrangements are known and staff support the young people and supervise the contact as required. All the young people are placed by authorities some distance away and usually attend there for contact. Staff are diligent to transport the young people to these meetings.

The service is child focused and offers the young people many informal occasions to be involved in choices within the home. There is an expectation of at least one house meeting every week. Where a young person has missed the meeting staff have ensured that their views are captured in an individual session and recorded; sometimes on the same day.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Pathway Plans are in place for some young people. Where the placing authority has yet to transfer care to the post 16 team the home awaits an identified social worker and planning meeting. There is a strong support for involvement of the young person in their future and evidence of this. Plans in place address the individuality of each young person. The service retains links with young people who are now in independent living; a testament to consistent and child focused support.

The home is comfortable and maintained to a good standard creating a pleasant domestic environment. The young people have single bedrooms that are personalised. Their choices are acknowledged in respect of decoration and personal items. Damage is repaired quickly by a maintenance person who attends to all the homes. The home utilises this provision as work experience for young people developing their independence skills under supervision.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The plans for the young people are individual. Tolerance is strongly promoted and confirmed by conversations with the young people. There are few multi-cultural artefacts around the home, however the staff team now reflects a wider cultural heritage.

The Statement of Purpose has been reviewed by the deputy manager earlier this year and is available to placing authorities.

The home maintains a detailed log of notifications, including contact made with the local police force. Not all occasions have been notified to Ofsted when the police service have attended the home.

Staff are experienced within the home and gaining appropriate childcare qualifications. The Registered Manager is a qualified social worker and holds high standards of professionalism. Staff feel well supported and guided.

A social worker undertakes the monthly regulatory inspection and produces a comprehensive report. Good standards are being maintained.

Quarterly reports are submitted to the Directors and contribute to scrutiny and consistency within the home.

Case records reflect individuality and are stored safely and securely.

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
2	ensure that care plans reflect the outcomes from reviews Regulation 12 (2)	31 July 2009
12	ensure that all health professionals are consulted where medication is being constantly refused Regulation 21 (2) (b)	31 July 2009

Recommendations

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

- ensure that there is evidence of the involvement of the young people in updating records
NMS 35
- ensure that strategies to engage with a young person who refuses identified care are
recorded NMS 2
- ensure that the complaints recorded show why any are incomplete NMS 16