

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC068032
Inspection date	18/03/2011
Inspector	Julian Parker
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	01/09/2010
--------------------------------	------------

© 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 has been established by the provider to offer a specialised provision for up to six young adolescent males who can present problematic sexualised behaviour related to their early life trauma.

The home offers the young people it looks after an integrated package of therapeutic care, education and outdoor pursuits tailored to meet individual needs from referral to eventual rehabilitation or independence.

The home is set in a large detached property in its own expansive grounds on the rural outskirts of a town. The home provides a high quality living environment for the young people it accommodates. Five young people are living in the home. They were present during part of the inspection and several contributed to the process.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

The purpose of this unannounced interim inspection was to follow up on recommendations made at the last inspection and to assess key standards under the outcome area of staying safe. The home continues to provide a good level of care to young people. The actions made at the last inspection are commented on in the improvement section of this report.

The home continues to provide a good level of care to young people. Effective safeguarding practice and systems promote well-being. Young people's behaviour is encouraged and managed positively. Young people respond well to good staffing levels and to the rewards and incentives used by the home which support them to develop their understanding and social skills.

Young people effectively make their views known through their compliant behaviour that confirms they are listened to. The home environment is very comfortably maintained with routines and systems being in place to ensure appropriate health and safety checks are carried out regularly.

On this inspection, two recommendations are made to improve the compliance of specific areas of management recording.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the registered provider was required to ensure that staff working at the home were correctly supported by the provision of timely training and

regular management supervision. These areas have been improved to fully comply with standards. Previously copies of Regulation 33 monitoring reports were not available in the home, undermining how the provider evaluated its operational practice. Comprehensive monthly reports, signed off by the manager, now confirm that this system is operational and compliant.

Recommendations addressing personnel file contents, holding and recording young peoples meetings and the condition of one area of the home, have also been satisfactorily acted upon.

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 live in a well maintained safe home where their wellbeing is promoted. Although living in a group of six, individual privacy is provided for by the provision of lockable single rooms with en suite bathing facilities. Personal confidentiality is effectively maintained by staff, trained to know how and with whom they can share information. Wherever possible, young people are invited to be part of this process, by contributing comments to their own records. All of the home's administration is kept secure when not in use and personal data is protected.

The procedures for safeguarding young people are established by policies and guidance, developed by the registered person. These fully comply with current regulatory requirements that promote best practice in areas of child protection, including the countering of bullying, effective behaviour management and dealing with young people who may leave the home with permission. Staff know of the Local Safeguarding Children Board requirements, including how to recognise signs of abuse, and respond decisively to any allegations about adults or peers. Staff receive regular statutory and specialist training that informs their practice for looking after young people safely. The home has in place practical systems to notify relevant authorities of significant events.

Young people are regularly invited, through the home's day to day practice, to raise any concerns or complaints they may have either about the home or any aspect of their care directly with staff or the manager. Young people have access to a clear responsive complaints procedure that is outlined in their revised guide to the home. They also have unrestricted access to services provided by independent advocates, including the regulator, confirming that their views will be listened to. The home takes complaints from any source, including young people, very seriously, and deals with all levels of concern effectively. Through the use of these systems young people know they will be listened to.

The management of young people's behaviour is centred upon the active encouragement of acceptable social behaviour, both within the home and the wider community. Staff provide young people with positive role models and explicit behavioural boundaries that are fair, consistent and easily understood. In this way, young people can understand what is reasonably being expected from them and the rationale for the expectation. The home retains a relatively low level of recorded incidents, confirming that young people are being encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour while being prevented from hurting themselves or others. In cases where young people display particular difficulties with their impulse control, these issues are specifically addressed by revised placement plans, staff guidance and input from qualified therapists.

The registered provider ensures, through robust policy and practice, that young people, staff and visitors are kept safe from the risk posed by fire and other hazards. Records confirm that regular preventative drills take place, ensuring that everyone knows what to do in an emergency. The regular review of risk assessments for all potential environmental and activity related hazards confirms the overall health and safety of everyone using the home is being actively promoted. The corporate certificate of insurance does not presently identify the home by address as required by the national minimum standards. This administrative shortfall does not adversely affect the care being provided to keep young people safe.

The vetting of staff and visitors to the home is thorough. Young people's safety is protected because employed staff do not work within the home until all necessary checks and references confirm them as being suitable. However, not all personnel files fully confirm the inclusion of adequate recorded proof of individual identification as required by Schedule 2. All newly appointed staff undergo a comprehensive induction process that informs and prepares them for safely working with young people. Visitors to the home are not permitted any unsupervised access to young people. By ensuring young people only have contact with authorised adults, their safety is being promoted.

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 that the certificate of insurance identifies the home by name and address (NMS 26.9)
- ensure that personnel files include substantive evidence of identity. (NMS 27.1)