

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Maria McGranaghan
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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 home is a semi-detached house in its own grounds situated on a quiet residential road with access to local shops, schools, public transport and leisure facilities. The service provides care and accommodation for up to four young people of either gender aged from eight to 16 years. There is a focus on meeting the needs of young people with behavioural and emotional difficulties through holistic care planning and individual support. The home works together with parents, professionals and external services to meet the needs of young people.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

The visit was an interim inspection and was unannounced. The inspection looked at how well the service safeguards and protects young people's welfare. It also looked at the progress made from the two recommendations made at the last key inspection about, staff training and consent for first aid and non-prescribed medication.

Young people have excellent relationships with the staff and are confident that they will be listened to and heard, their privacy is respected and their personal needs met within the home. Similarly, young people's overall safety is effectively managed. Clear and consistent staff guidance ensures that young people's safety and well-being is reliably monitored and therefore not compromised. Young people benefit from staff who are well trained and skilled to manage the complex needs of young people and who help them to develop essential life skills. However, there is one minor shortfall relating to room searches. Nevertheless, this does not impact on the outcome for young people which remains outstanding.

Improvements since the last inspection

The home has taken positive steps to address the two matters raised at the last key inspection. Consent for all young people to receive first aid, non-prescribed medication and homeopathic remedies is now on file and this ensures that young people's well-being is not compromised. Plans for continuous training for staff are developed and in place thus ensuring that staff receive the training necessary in order to work with the young people.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Young people feel their privacy and confidentiality is highly regarded by staff at the home. They confirm that staff knock on their doors before entering and respect their need for private time alone. Young people confirm that no room searches have taken place in the home and that their personal effects are valued by the staff. Likewise young people have access to a separate and private telephone in order to make and receives telephone calls and have ample space in order to see visitors in the home. However, there is limited guidance or methods of recording in the area of room search should this become a necessary action.

Young people confirm they know how to complain and how to access information to assist them to do this. Information is available in the young people's guide and notice board within the home and includes contact numbers for external agencies that can be contacted independently of the home. The excellent relationship between staff and young people ensures that the young people's views are valued and that they feel confident to raise matters, knowing they will be appropriately addressed.

Staff undertake child protection training in order that they are able to respond appropriately to allegations or suspicions of abuse. Detailed risk assessments are in place and assist to capture specific risks for each young person. A monthly review of the risk assessments takes place and young people are encouraged to have direct input in developing this. This process enables young people to see where risk has reduced or escalated and assists in evaluating the methods used to reduce any potential risks. This is an excellent tool that assists young people to both understand and begin to manage personal risk. Similarly, young people benefit from regular sessions with a clinical psychologist and key worker on a variety of issues including bullying. These exceptional sessions are supported by group discussions that help to raise young people's awareness of the issues surrounding bullying and how they are to be supported should they experience this. Young people confirm bullying is not tolerated in the home and feel that staff will take the appropriate action should an incident occur. Records indicate that in three years one minor incident has occurred and this was appropriately recorded and managed in the home. Information about the home's approach to bullying is detailed in the young people's guide and is supported by good information displayed within the home. Staff demonstrated that they both are efficient and vigilant and understand the home's zero tolerance approach to this matter.

Young people who go missing from home have the appropriate action taken by staff to ensure their safe return. Clear procedural guidance and effective monitoring

enables prompt reporting while individual risk assessments inform practice. Excellent relationships are developed with local agencies who visit the home frequently to have informal discussions with the young people. Working in partnership with external agencies helps to ensure that young people are offered additional support and guidance in order to maintain their overall safety. Comparatively, young people are encouraged to demonstrate socially acceptable behaviour. Methods such as incentives for young people who have acted on their own initiative or complete their weekly plan, are in place and prove successful. Likewise young people benefit from regular sessions with the home's clinical psychologist and this is supported by individual key worker sessions. This exceptional work helps to identify triggers for young people and ways in which their behaviour can be managed effectively and positively; as a result sanctions are minimal. Staff focus on de-escalation techniques and engage with young people in order to assist them work through their anger. As a result there has been no physical intervention within the home. Young people feel that staff spend time with them and understand them, and this helps young people to develop trusting relationships, enabling them to discuss matters that upset them or make them angry.

The physical environment is safe and secure. Staff promote young people's continued protection by undertaking regular fire drills and tests and making sure that all faults are efficiently addressed. The home has a sprinkler system fitted in each room of the home and this ensures an immediate proactive response within the home should a fire break out.

Staff are vigilant when managing visitors to the home. Appropriate steps are taken to verify visitor's identity in order to maintain the safety of the young people living in the home. The Statement of Purpose and function includes a glossary of staff presently employed within the home and is complemented by a list of their individual experience and qualifications. The staff at the home are suitable checked ensuring young people's overall safety within the home is maintained.

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 guidance in relation to room search is made available for staff and young people and any room search taking place is appropriately recorded. (NMS 9.8)