

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Liz Driver
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Date of last inspection	25/01/2010
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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 setting is a family sized home, which provides accommodation and care for up to two young people who have experienced emotional and behavioural difficulties. A private company owns and operates this setting. The house has, on the ground floor, a lounge, a kitchen and breakfast room, computer room and toilet. Bedrooms, a bathroom and shower room are on the first floor. There is a small garden to the rear of the property.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This interim inspection was unannounced taking place on a weekday. One action was made as a result of this inspection. Key standards in staying safe were assessed plus other national minimum standards in enjoying and achieving, economic wellbeing and organisation. Two young people are currently accommodated at the setting and one young person talked briefly to the inspector.

The home continues to function to a very good standard. The manager is supported by an experienced and caring staff team who receive appropriate training. Robust policies and procedures support the day-to-day practice that is of a very good standard. The experienced and committed staff team ensures consistency of care for young people. Education is seen as a priority with some good attendance levels. The setting is well maintained and homely with an active programme of redecoration and renewal of furnishings and fixtures. Procedures are in place to ensure young people are kept safe both in and out of the home.

The action made is for the manager to submit an application for registration.

Improvements since the last inspection

No actions or recommendations were made at the last inspection.

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.

Staff respect young people's privacy and seek permission by knocking before entering their rooms. There is clear guidance in place for staff to follow in the event that a room search is carried out. Young people are made aware of this on admission. Room searches are only undertaken if it is felt a young person is putting themselves at risk. Records show a low numbers of room searches to have taken place. Shared facilities such as toilets and bathrooms all have appropriate locks. Staff discuss confidential information with young people in private and information relating to each young person is stored in an appropriately locked facility. Young people have access to a telephone.

The home has a robust complaints procedure that staff and young people are very well informed of. Young people are made aware of the complaints process when they are admitted to the home. No complaints have been made by young people since the last inspection. Regular key work sessions ensure that the staff are proactive in ascertaining the thoughts and feelings of the young people for whom they care. There has been one external complaint made since the last inspection, this resulted in a good outcome.

The home operates with an experienced staff team who are aware of the need to provide a safe and caring environment for the young people. All members of staff have attended training in child protection and safeguarding. They are aware of what they need to do in the event that they have concerns about a young person's welfare. The setting's policy is up to date, in accordance with local area child protection and safeguarding procedures and easily accessible to staff.

The home has a zero tolerance approach to bullying and young people are made aware of this in their handbook, which they are given when they arrive. Bullying is not currently an issue in the home.

The home has a very clear policy in place with regards to young people going missing. Individualised protocols ensure that the correct agencies are informed if a young person goes missing. Young people are made aware of the consequences of leaving the home without permission or not returning at an agreed time. The home's monitoring and response to individual young people is very good with thoroughly thought-out, well planned and consistent responses from staff.

It is made clear to young people what is expected of them in relation to behaviour. All young people who live in the home have an individual behaviour management plan which outlines their fears, anxieties and what may trigger challenging behaviour. These are underpinned with personal plans which outline goals for the young people and what rewards they can earn. The home has an established system for the recording and reporting of accidents and incidents. While staff receive physical intervention training to help manage incidents of challenging behaviour, interventions are very rarely used. The home uses a rewards system where points

are given for a range of behaviours, including settling well at night and going to school. These are monitored by the manager and challenged if felt to be inappropriate.

Regular key work sessions ensure that behaviour issues are discussed and that the young people's views are acknowledged and valued.

There are good systems to ensure the safety of young people in the home. These include regular testing of fire alarms and equipment, fire drills and checking visitor's identity. Maintenance is good with all repairs being dealt with in an acceptable timescale. The building is kept free from risks and hazards both inside and outside. Regular environmental assessments are carried out to ensure that all health and safety risks are addressed.

There are robust recruitment procedures in place that ensure no member of staff is employed without all necessary checks being confirmed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The staff work hard to ensure each young person has the opportunity to attend an educational placement. Staff liaise closely with local education departments and arrange meetings to prepare individual education plans and personal education plans. The home has an ethos where education is highly valued and young people are encouraged to take advantage of the support and opportunities given to them. Current young people are engaging very well in education with very good attendance levels. Staff also support young people in gaining employment that is appropriate and of interest to individual young people.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is not judged.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The home provides a good standard of accommodation throughout. It presents as clean, homely and warm. There is a clear programme of on-going redecoration and renewal of furnishings and fixtures. The house is due to have some areas repainted in the near future. Young people can personalise their rooms and choose the décor to their tastes. There is a decked garden area for young people to enjoy.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The staff have many years combined service of caring for young people in residential care. They are reflective in their practice and are encouraged to challenge each other. Roles and responsibilities are well known and the shifts are organised effectively. The manager is experienced and generally additional to the staff on duty. There are high numbers of staff to meet the needs of the young people in placement. The organisation provides a very good range of training opportunities to its staff and ensures the basic necessary training, such as child protection, is refreshed regularly. The gender balance amongst staff is good and there is careful consideration of the best way of using individual strengths to promote the best care to young people. Young people clearly benefit from this strong staff team. The current manager has not yet submitted his application for registration.

The home continues to be monitored by the manager and the regulation 33 visitor, who provides comprehensive monthly reports submitted to Ofsted without fail.

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/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Std.	Action	Due date
34	The registered provider shall appoint an individual to manage the children's home and submit an application for their registration. (Regulation 7 (1) (a))	29/10/2010