

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspection date	01/02/2011
Inspector	Mark Kersh
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	28/07/2010
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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

The home is a privately run children's home, which provides care and accommodation for two young people of either sex, aged from 10 years to 17 years of age.

The home is a detached four bedroom property, situated in a residential area. On the first floor of the house, there is a bathroom and four individual bedrooms, two of which are staff sleep-in rooms. One of these bedrooms is also used as an office. On the ground floor, there is a lounge, kitchen with dining area, toilet, utility room and conservatory.

The home has an enclosed rear garden, and to the front of the property there is a driveway, providing car parking for a number of cars.

Two young people currently live in this home, of whom one was present during this inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

This was a unannounced interim inspection to assess the home's capacity to meet the outcome area for staying safe and to check if the previous actions and recommendation have been complied with. The outcome areas for being healthy, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution, economic well-being and organisation were not assessed on this occasion.

The home is a satisfactory service. Young people's welfare and safety is generally promoted. There are suitable systems in place to promote health and safety within the home. Staff are experienced and well trained and they know what to do, to keep young people safe and protect them from coming to harm.

Four actions and one recommendation have been made following this inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the previous inspection, the Registered Manager was asked to ensure staff follow the procedure for when young people are absent from the home without authority; to keep under review and revise the children's guide, and to ensure staff receive appropriate supervision. Records for young people who absent themselves from the home without permission show staff follow the procedure correctly. There is a revised children's guide within the home. Staff supervision is not being carried out

in line with regulations, and this action will be carried forward following this inspection. A recommendation to improve records to demonstrate how the placement plan is effectively monitored by key workers has been met.

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.

Young people's privacy is respected and promoted. They are provided with their own separate bedrooms and the home's washing facilities enable them to wash with privacy and dignity. Young people's private records are securely stored by staff to protect them. Staff handle young people's sensitive information confidentially.

There has been one recorded complaint made about the care in the home since the previous inspection. Young people are aware of the home's complaints procedure, so they do know how to make a complaint if they need to. The complaint investigation is ongoing and within procedural time scales. There are good arrangements in place for young people to raise their complaints or concerns independently. The home's complaints policy is clearly summarised for young people in a user-friendly format, which is known and referred to as a children's guide.

There are no current issues or concerns in relation to bullying. Where young people have been absent from the home without authority, records clearly show that staff have followed the home's procedures, to promote their safe return. Risks associated with young people going missing are clearly recorded and risk assessments are stringently followed to promote young people's welfare and safety. The home works closely with outside agencies charged with protecting young people, to implement strategies to minimise young people being absent without authority.

All staff are trained in child protection, so that they know how to protect young people from abuse, exploitation and harm. There is a system in place to notify all relevant authorities of significant events. However, Ofsted has not been notified of a significant event or of the Registered Manager's absence and the arrangements to cover this absence. As a result some staff supervision has not taken place within required timescales, and a daily log of events has not been completed.

All staff are trained in the use of restraint, which includes diversion and de-escalation strategies to enable them to manage young people's behaviours safely. There have been no recorded restraints for some considerable time. Sanctions are used fairly as a reprimand to show young people there are consequences towards any unacceptable behaviour. However, young people do not have an opportunity to write or have their views recorded and sign their names against them in the sanction

records kept by the home.

Health and safety is generally promoted and there are good systems in place for the routine maintenance and testing of the home's household electrical appliances. All of the home's fire appliances are professionally serviced and there are good arrangements made for the promotion of fire safety, in which all young people and staff are trained. There are weekly inspections of the home's fire safety systems for health and safety reasons. Regular fire drills take place, and young people and staff know how to evacuate the home safely.

Safe recruitment practices are followed and this ensures that staff employed are appropriately vetted. Staff files were inspected during this visit and these were found to be fully compliant with legislative requirements. Staff are not permitted to work with young people until all of the necessary checks have been completed and cleared.

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?

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
20	notify without delay the relevant persons or agencies of the matters set out in Schedule 5, with particular reference to Ofsted (Regulation 30.1)	04/02/2011
29	maintain in the children's home the records specified in Schedule 4, in particular a daily log of events occurring in the home (Regulation 29.1)	04/02/2011
34	ensure where the absence of the Registered Manager arises as a result of an emergency, the registered person shall give notice of the absence within one week of its occurrence, specifying the matters mentioned in sub-paragraphs (a) to (e) of paragraph (2) (Regulation 37.3)	04/02/2011
28	ensure staff receive appropriate supervision and appraisal. (Regulation 27.4.a)	04/02/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure when disciplinary measures are used, young people are encouraged to write or have their views recorded and sign their names against them if possible in the records kept by the home. (NMS 22.14)