

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Michael McCleave
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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 is a local authority run children's home. It is a detached single storey building situated in a residential area. Staff provide care for young people who are vulnerable and for different reasons unable to live with their families. The home accommodates up to eight young people aged from 10 to 17-years-old.

Young people have individual bedrooms with en-suite shower rooms. The home has a lounge, kitchen with dining area, quiet or computer room, bathroom and a laundry. The garden is enclosed and has a lawn and patio area. The home is situated within easy access to the local community, public transport and leisure facilities.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This unannounced interim inspection looked at the progress the setting has made with the recommendation made at the last inspection. This related to young people not being aware that they can see their records. The Every Child Matters outcome Staying Safe was inspected at this inspection. Being Healthy, Enjoying and Achieving, Positive Contribution, Economic Wellbeing and Organisation were not looked at during this inspection.

This is a busy home with young people who demonstrate challenging behaviour. Staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding practice and they provide the young people with a safe stable environment. Updated training in child protection awareness is due for all staff. There is nevertheless, a good understanding and awareness among staff of their safeguarding responsibilities.

Improvements since the last inspection

The manager was asked to ensure that young people were made aware that they can have access to their records. Appropriate steps have been taken to inform all young people that they have a right to see their records.

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 are aware of the rights of young people to their privacy. The young people each have a key to their bedroom and can retire to their room to be alone if they choose. There are other facilities such as a quiet room and contact room where they can meet with their families or social worker in private. All confidential information stored in the office is locked away and cannot be accessed by unauthorised persons.

There is a complaints procedure in place. An informative leaflet is available and this is designed in a way so that young people can easily understand about how to make a complaint. They are able to contact the children's rights service if they have any concerns, and this information is included in the welcome pack of information given to all young people when they initially move into this home.

The staff have a good understanding of their child protection responsibilities. The Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures are available in the main office and all staff have completed appropriate safeguarding training. Most are due refresher training and the home will be notified by the training unit when this is available. Young people said they feel safe in the home. Social workers visiting the home are very complimentary about the care provided and they are satisfied that this is a safe home for the young people.

Staff recognise that bullying can take place. A practice known as restorative justice is carried out and this involves the perpetrator of the bullying discussing their actions with the victim and the other young people. Currently there are no incidents of bullying reported by young people.

The home has an appropriate procedure to manage situations if a young person is absent without authority, or, does not return to the home at a specified time. Individual risk assessments are in place and a protocol with the local police has been agreed on the actions to take. All young people are interviewed on their return and asked if they wish to speak to someone independent of the home. Staff focus on welcoming the young person back and acting with sensitivity. This is good practice.

Although all staff are trained in behaviour management including restraint techniques, restraint is only used as a last resort to protect a young person or member of staff. Records indicate that some restraint has been necessary due to violent assaults on staff. Staff prefer to use the restorative approach to engage with the young people in discussing difficulties thereby involving them in the resolution to the issue.

The safety systems at the home are maintained and all appropriate checks of appliances are up to date. Fire safety records indicate that drills are held regularly including night time evacuations. Risk assessments to cover the home and activities are in place. These measures help to ensure the safety of the young people and staff.

The safeguarding of the young people, is enhanced by the recruitment and selection procedures. All appropriate safety checks are carried out before appointments are confirmed. References are verbally checked with the referees. This is good practice and is part of the overall process that keeps the young people safe. Young people are involved in the selection process by participating in the children's panel. This demonstrates a positive approach towards equality and diversity.

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 the provision of training for all staff, including ancillary staff, in the prevention of abuse, recognition of abuse, dealing with disclosures or suspicions of abuse and the home's child protection procedures. (NMS 17.8)