

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC359846
Inspection date	23 March 2010
Inspector	Trevor Hall
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	5 January 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 outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

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 provides care and accommodation for up to five young people of either gender aged between 13 to 17 years on admission who exhibit challenging behaviour. Placements are on a medium- to long-term basis. Emergency admissions are considered if sufficient places are available and appropriate assessments of risk can be undertaken. The home provides accommodation up to the age of 18 depending upon the needs of each young person and the requirements of the placing authority. The property is detached and has private gardens to the front and rear. There are five single bedrooms for young people.

Summary

This was an unannounced random inspection that concentrated on checking all key national minimum standards under the 'Every Child Matters' area of staying safe and two standards in organisation, to which recommendations had been made on the home's last inspection. The home's last key inspection took place on 5 January 2010, when no actions and two recommendations were made and the home was judged to be outstanding. Five young people are currently living in the home.

This inspection confirmed that this home continues to be extremely well managed and young people benefit from living in an environment that is centred on meeting their individual needs. The home has well established regimes in place for the effective assessment of risk and staff take all reasonable precautions to ensure that young people, staff and visitors are safe at all times.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection staff supervision has improved, with all new staff still undertaking their probationary employment period now receiving the enhanced frequency of formal supervision required by the national minimum standards.

Young people are also receiving the benefits of being looked after by more knowledgeable staff, as the number of staff currently deployed in the home, who have attained a National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in looking after children and young people has risen above the ratio required by the national minimum standards.

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 benefit from living in a home where they are encouraged to express any anxieties or concerns and their views and opinions are respected. The welfare and safety of young people is promoted by the highly effective application of good company policy and procedures and the home's well established systems for keeping young people safe. The stability of the home, promoted by a considered admission practice and stable core staff team, enhance the way in

which young people can be protected. Staff receive on-going training in child protection and behaviour management that helps underpin safe day-to-day practice.

Good guidance consistently practiced by a dedicated staff team, ensure that young people live in a home where their privacy and confidentiality are both respected and promoted. Staff are aware of the young people's right to privacy and how this may be safely promoted. Young people confirm that staff do not enter their bedrooms without knocking first and are sensitive in tempering the need for appropriate support and supervision, with their need for privacy. The home has effective policies in respect of staff conducting searches of young people's bedrooms. Young people's care records are maintained securely and contents are not discussed inappropriately.

The young people living at this home are aware of the reason they are being looked after and understand the responsibility of staff to keep them and others safe, both within the home and in public places. Staff are fully informed of the types of behaviour which the young people may display and accordingly maintain good, up-to-date risk assessments, that help to minimise the potential for young people to subject themselves or others to harm. Young people are assisted to keep safe by being looked after by staff who know how to respond to challenging behaviours and who know what to do in circumstances where young people absent themselves from the home without authority. Young people are encouraged to reflect on the consequences of their behaviour after such incidents to learn how to help themselves to be safe and behave responsibly.

Young people confirm that they are encouraged and supported by their carers who help them address their problems and behaviour and to identify and maintain safe behavioural boundaries that will help their social reintegration and personal development.

Staff working at this home take positive steps to keep young people and visitors safe from all environmental hazards including fire. Detailed environmental risk assessments are completed and updated regularly; all staff within the home are involved in these routines to ensure that health and safety is consistently promoted by everyone. All portable electrical appliances are regularly tested for electrical safety and all equipment in the home and all safety equipment is serviced with approved regularity and is properly maintained. Frequent checks are undertaken on fire equipment and emergency lighting, and fire drills are regularly completed. The current acting manager ensures that utilities, domestic equipment and vehicles are checked to ensure they are safe to use. Young people live in a home which provides excellent physical safety and security. This home takes the safety and welfare of the residents extremely seriously and young people do live in a home which is both physically safe and secure.

The home has robust procedures in place for the monitoring of visitors to the home. The organisation that owns the home has a clearly defined recruitment process which protects young people by ensuring that all of the national minimum standards requirements are met, in all instances, prior to any staff member being deployed into the home. A written record of this process is maintained for inspection and is followed in respect of all staff currently employed.

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 outstanding.

This is an outstanding home that is extremely well managed. The quality of the home's management impacts directly on the quality of the care and support young people receive within the home. Excellent communication is a feature of the home, which enables each staff team to be well informed about daily events, routines and the progress of each young person. Staff know and understand the stated aims and objectives of the service which is consistent with the home's Statement of Purpose.

There is good leadership and management support because the home's manager is qualified, skilled and experienced and provides strong and effective leadership to the staff team and young people. The manager is actively involved in the day-to-day operation of the home and has clear expectations that the staff team will achieve the best possible outcomes for all young people in their care. All staff receive regular one-to-one supervision from either the home's manager or one of the home's senior care staff; staff still completing their probationary employment are now receiving supervision at the increased frequency required by the national minimum standards.

Young people benefit from being looked after by a staff group that is both experienced, enthusiastic and well qualified. There is a good emphasis given to staff training and development which is focused on areas relating to young people's needs. The current staff group now meets the required 80% level of staff having completed their National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in childcare. The home's manager is able to demonstrate that all staff currently deployed to the home, other than those currently undertaking their probationary employment, have completed a suitable course of training.

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 meets the Care Standards Act 2000, The Childrens Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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Recommendations

There are no recommendations.