

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Sue Winson
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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 large detached property situated in a residential area. The home has five bedrooms and sufficient communal space for the number of young people. The home is situated close to public transport, local schools and amenities. The home is registered to care for four young people aged between 11 and 17 years in age.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This unannounced interim inspection considered all key standards under the three outcome areas of being healthy, staying safe and organisation. Four young people were present during the inspection. This is an outstanding home where individualised care and high levels of support allow young people to achieve positive outcomes. They have a voice and their opinions and views are listened to. They are confident that staff will support and help them. Young people are safeguarded and their complex and varied needs are well met through working in partnership with other professionals. Positive behaviour management, based on consistency of care and positive relationships between them and the staff helps them take responsibility for their actions. The home is efficiently run and effectively managed.

Improvements since the last inspection

No actions or recommendations were made at the last inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Young people enjoy a healthy, balanced and varied diet and are involved in compiling menus, shopping and cooking. Staff are trained and inform young people about kitchen hygiene and promote healthy eating. Individual diets are continuously monitored. There is sufficient dining space and meals are social occasions taken at table with staff.

Young people's health needs are identified and services are provided to meet them. Excellent placement plans outline both physical and emotional health needs and specify how they will be met. These are in line with local authority care plans and are updated regularly in consultation with young people who are encouraged to sign and comment. Good communication with placing social workers is maintained to the benefit of the young people. Individual work with the young people addresses the

issues identified in their plans and there is a focus on promoting self-confidence and self worth. Staff are innovative in finding ways to encourage them to engage in individual sessions. All the young people are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians and the home advocates on their behalf for the provision of specialised services. Positive relationships with the local Looked After Children (LAC) nurse and Child and Adolescent Mental Health workers benefit the young people.

The welfare of young people is safeguarded by the home's policies, procedures and practices for administering first aid and non-prescription medication. Appropriate written permissions are held on file and full records and stock checks are carried out. Staff receive training and medicines are safely stored and dispensed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Young people's privacy is well respected and information is confidentially handled. Young people are able to see visitors, talk to staff and make telephone calls in private. They say that staff knock on bedroom doors before entering and they have keys to their own rooms. Room searches are carried out only when necessary for safety reasons and young people are informed. Staff sign confidentiality agreements and ensure that young people's information is safely stored and is shared with others only when this is in their interests.

The home's policies and practices in respect of complaints, safeguarding, bullying and absence without authority promote young people's welfare and protect them. Central records are maintained by the manager for monitoring purpose and she also ensures that staff are trained and receive updates as necessary. Young people are informed of their rights, encouraged to have a voice and know of a range of people to whom they can make complaints. Young people's welfare is actively and effectively promoted and individual work addresses personal safety in line with their placement plans. All significant events are notified to the relevant people in a timely manner. Young people are protected from bullying. They are regularly reminded what constitutes bullying in group and individual sessions. As far as is possible, young people are protected when absent without authority and the home has been successful in reducing incidents. Staff follow procedures, try to keep in touch by mobile phone and ensure that young people are seen by someone outside of the home on their return. Safe caring practices in the home benefit the young people. They say that they feel safe and can talk to staff if they have any concerns or worries.

Young people are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for their own actions through positive behaviour management. Reward systems are effective and the young people like the opportunities to achieve their individual goals. Staff routinely use praise and encouragement which results in few sanctions, which are fair and reasonable. There has been no use of physical intervention. Staff know the young people well, maintain positive relationships and ensure consistency of care through good communication.

A range of individual risk assessments provide staff with strategies to reduce or minimise risks. They are updated regularly and young people are encouraged to participate. The home provides physical safety and security and appropriate checks are carried out within the required timescales. Regular house checks ensure that any repairs are carried out in a timely manner. All the young people have opportunities to practice evacuating the building at fire drills.

There is careful selection and vetting of staff and robust monitoring of visitors, which protects the young people. Referees are routinely contacted and asked for verification of the reasons employment ended. All checks are carried out before staff work in the home.

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.

The home's Statement of Purpose outlines the services provided and how it operates. The welcome pack for young people gives them the information they need and includes photographs of staff and information about bullying and how to complain.

Young people receive excellent care from the managers and staff group, the majority of whom have worked in the home for some time. They work well as a team, under the effective leadership and guidance of the manager and deputy manager, and young people benefit from consistency of care. Efficient communication systems, including thorough handovers between shifts, ensure that all staff have full information to meet young people's needs. Staff are regularly supervised, well supported and well trained. Staff meetings provide in house training opportunities and the chance to discuss the young people and practice issues.

The home is well managed, efficiently run and auditing systems are robust. Visits under Regulation 33 take place each month and comprehensive reports, which include action planning, are useful in guiding improvements. The manager and deputy consistently act on any concerns or deficits raised in the reports in a timely manner. Young people's files are well ordered, up to date and reflect their progress well.