

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC368137
Inspection date	29 January 2010
Inspector	Jim Palmer
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	16 September 2009
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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

The home is a three storey period house in a small town near the coast, and provides individual care for one young person with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is not easily accessible to young people, staff or visitors with restricted mobility or visual impairments.

The bedrooms for young people and staff are on the first floor, and the staff office is on the second floor, the latter reached by very steep steps. Young people and staff share a bathroom.

There is a kitchen and lounge space for dining and relaxing. The home has a very small garden at the front and back. Sports and leisure facilities can be accessed by car, and there are many local places of interest to visit.

Education is provided either locally or at the company's own small school, situated at another children's home approximately half an hour's drive away.

Summary

This was a statutory unannounced interim inspection. The staying safe outcome group was fully assessed and the two recommendations arising from the previous inspection were examined to establish whether they had been implemented.

This was a positive inspection; one recommendation was met, the second recommendation is repeated and will be assessed at the next full inspection.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Two Recommendations were made at the last inspection. The first was to continue with the present plan to repair and maintain the premises. The house is now maintained and decorated to good standard and that recommendation is met.

The second was to ensure that the Registered Manager continues to work toward achieving a recognised qualification in management. Since the last inspection, the company has appointed a new manager to the home. They are also working towards achieving a recognised management qualification, so the previous recommendation is repeated.

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.

Young people's safety continues to be promoted by the staff of this home. Young people have keys to their rooms and staff knock and call out before entering a bedroom. The need to respect privacy and confidentiality is discussed in staff team meetings. There is a policy and practice guidance for staff on privacy and confidentiality; this includes the need to share information on a need-to-know basis to ensure young people are protected from harm

There is a complaints procedure that is known to young people and staff. The complaints log shows no complaints have been made since the last inspection. This record is regularly audited by internal and visiting managers.

The home has a child protection policy and staff receive regular training and are aware of how they should respond to any safeguarding concerns. A copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines is available to staff online. No child protection referrals have been made since the last inspection. There is an anti-bullying strategy in place. Bullying is not an issue in this home, however, staff continue to receive training and remain vigilant about the possibility of bullying.

The home has a policy on young people being absent without authority. The staff encourage independence and reduce the level of supervision in line with the care plan for a young person. Should a young person become absent without authority, a robust risk based policy is implemented. Any contacts as a result of an absence are well recorded and any young people are invited to discuss any concerns on their return.

Staff are aware of the need to report any significant incidents; formal notifications to appropriate agencies are made by duty managers. No notifications of significant incidents have been made since the last inspection.

The restraints and sanctions records show that no restraints or sanctions have been imposed since the last inspection. Staff receive regular training in the use of physical restraint. There is a behaviour management policy in place based on positive reinforcement. Sanctions and restraints are only used as a last resort.

The safety of young people and staff is promoted by the use of comprehensive risk assessments for the premises, activities, equipment and individual young people. Monthly fire safety drills are held and all fire equipment is checked regularly. The fire safety log is well recorded. The home has an emergency plan in place.

Staff recruitment records were examined at the last full inspection and found to be good. They were not checked on this occasion.

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 satisfactory.

The home is maintained to a good standard and is well decorated and furnished in a pleasant domestic style. There is a rolling programme for maintenance and re-decoration of the home; a heating engineer was working in the home at the time of the inspection. The recommendation arising from the last inspection regarding the continuing maintenance programme is now met.

The young person did not wish to participate in the inspection, so it was not possible to assess the standard of furnishing and décor in his bedroom.

The other standards in this outcome group had no recommendations or requirements made at the last inspection so were not assessed on this occasion. The judgement for this outcome group therefore remains unchanged.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The company has recently appointed a new manager to the home. The newly appointed manager is currently undertaking training in order to achieve a recognised management qualification. This work is ongoing and therefore the recommendation arising from the previous inspection is repeated.

The other standards in this outcome group were not judged and the judgement for this outcome group remains unchanged.

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

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

- ensure that the Registered Manager continues to work toward achieving a recognised qualification in management equivalent to the Registered Manager's Award. (NMS 34)