

## Inspection report for Children's Home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC370956   |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 09/02/2011 |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Jim Palmer |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Random     |

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|--------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 18/11/2010 |
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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 located within a rural setting and provides placements for up to four young people, of both genders, aged from 10 to 16 years. The property is a large detached bungalow with large gardens suitable for outdoor play and recreation. Communal accommodation includes a large lounge, an additional lounge that can be used for education or art and craft activities, dining area and kitchen. All young people have single bedrooms and there are separate sleeping and bathroom facilities for staff.

The home focuses on working with young people, who may have challenging behaviours and corresponding difficulty in settling in more mainstream provision. The aim of the home is to offer medium to long-term or emergency placements for young people who have complex emotional and behavioural difficulties.

### **Summary**

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection of this service. The inspection focused on the staying safe outcome group and the progress made in implementing the actions and recommendations arising from the previous inspection.

Being healthy, positive contribution and economic well-being were not judged on this occasion.

Strengths of the service are the commitment to meeting the individual needs of young people in a positive and supportive manner. The home is well managed and monitored. Staff stability has improved and measures have been introduced to reduce the impact of any staff changes on young people.

Staying safe is judged as good, enjoying and achievement and economic well-being are judged as satisfactory. The overall judgement for the service remains satisfactory.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous inspection two actions and six recommendations were made. The manager and staff have made good progress in implementing these.

Staff and management stability have improved since the last inspection. Any new appointments or changes in staffing arrangements are explained to young people, prior to them taking place. The manager is now back in the home following a re-

deployment to another home. This action is now met but will be assessed at the next inspection to see if the improvements have been maintained.

The second action was to ensure that children access educational facilities appropriate to their age, aptitude, needs, and interests and potential. Guidance has been issued advising that all young people are to be provided with a suitable education placement as part of the placement plan. Each young person living at the home now had an educational placement agreed, however, had not started attending school at the time of the inspection. This action is judged as met but will be monitored at the next inspection.

The records of complaints are well recorded and now contain sufficient information detailing how the investigation was conducted and the outcome. This recommendation is met.

The records of the use of restraint show that some young people are offered the opportunity to be medically examined following restraint. There are no restraints recorded since the last inspection.

A recommendation to ensure that every effort is made in achieving continuity of staffing, in order that children's attachments are not overly disrupted is now covered by the measures introduced under the first action listed above.

Three recommendations are not fully met and are 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.

Staff continue to promote the privacy and confidentiality of young people. All receive training and practice guidance on the storing and sharing of confidential information. All young people are able to be private in their own bedroom and in bathrooms; they say that staff respect their privacy. There are adequate facilities for young people to access a telephone in private.

Young people are given information and say they are aware of the procedure for raising a complaint if they are unhappy with any aspect of the service. At the last inspection the complaints record did not hold sufficient information concerning the investigation and outcome of the complaint. One complaint is recorded in the complaints and compliments records. This record now holds all of the required information and is regularly monitored.

The welfare of young people is promoted by robust safeguarding policies that are known and understood by staff. Staff receive regular training in safeguarding awareness. The training needs of each staff member are monitored by the company human resources team who ensure that safeguarding training is renewed annually. Contact details of the Local Authority Designated Officer and a referral flowchart are displayed in the office for staff information. Staff display a sound knowledge of safeguarding procedures. The home uses pre-placement matching information and impact risk assessments in order to reduce the impact of new placements on other young people living in the home. No child protection referrals have been made since the last inspection.

The home follows the same anti-bullying policy as is used throughout the company. This is unchanged since the last inspection. Staff discuss bullying and strategies to reduce the number of incidents with young people in meetings with key workers and house meetings. Young people say that bullying is not an issue in the home at this time but incidents have occurred in the past.

The safety of young people who are absent without authority, is promoted by sound practice and procedures. There is a local missing person's protocol in place and all young people have a risk profile on their case records. The manager and staff are seeking to improve their liaison with the local police. All young people are spoken with on their return to the home and offered the opportunity to speak about any reasons they may have for leaving the home. There is a good process in place for notifying families and appropriate organisations about any significant incidents that occur.

Young people are encouraged and supported in taking increasing self responsibility for managing their behaviours. The behaviour management programme which is based on praise and achievement linked to rewards is unchanged since the last inspection. All young people have a personalised positive handling plan, which identifies triggers for certain behaviours and suggested strategies. These are reviewed and updated regularly. All staff receive training in an approved method of physical intervention. Any sanction imposed or reward given is recorded in a positive and negative consequences book. Physical intervention records are kept in a separate bound book. Both documents are well recorded and regularly audited. There are no physical interventions recorded since the last inspection.

The physical safety of young people and staff is promoted by the use of risk assessments and thorough health and safety policies which are known to and understood by staff. Fire safety equipment and electrical apparatus is safety tested regularly. Fire drills and staff fire training take place regularly. However, there is no record of one having been held at night since the last inspection.

There are robust staff recruitment procedures in place all applications are checked by the company human resources team to ensure that all staff are safely recruited.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people are encouraged and supported in attending school or undertaking educational work in the home. However, no young person was currently attending school. Both have the offer of an educational placement due to start shortly but neither have yet started at school. The home provides good facilities for young people to study in the house if they are not attending school and home tuition or Asdan work is made available to young people who are excluded or not attending school. The company has issued a directive to the placement team that all young people should have personal education plans in place including places at local schools however neither young people have current personal education plans in place; however, young people sometimes have an internal education plan. These plans are non specific and provide insufficient educational input. Some young people say that the distance between the home and the school is an obstacle to attendance.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is not judged.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is not judged.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Young people are now benefitting from the continuity of care provided by a more stable staff team. The manager is now back in post having been previously temporarily re-deployed to another home within the group. The company has introduced measures to increase staff retention and stability. Exit interviews are held with staff leaving and the human resources team monitor staff turnover. The success of these changes will be re-assessed at the next inspection, but the previous action is now met.

As a result of the volume of staff turnover, the home does not currently employ sufficient staff holding a recognised qualification. The current figure 38% of staff holding National Vocational Qualification at level 3 or higher falls significantly short of the national minimum standard

## **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 that at least one fire safety evacuation takes place at night in any 12 month period (NMS 26.8)
- ensure that each child has a personal education plan that shows how the home will promote educational attainment (NMS 14.2)
- ensure that all children of compulsory school age who are not in school has in place an educational programme during normal school hours (NMS 14.7).
- ensure that a minimum of 80% of all care staff have completed National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People and that new staff, who do not already hold this qualification, are working towards it within 3 months of joining the home. (NMS 29.5)