

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspection date	14/10/2010
Inspector	Susan Mullin
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	10/03/2010
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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 home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people of either gender, aged from 10 to 17 years old with emotional or behavioural difficulties. The home is a detached five bedroom farmhouse situated in open countryside. It is in a remote location and transport is required to access education, community facilities and services.

There are gardens to the front and side of the house in addition to a driveway for car parking. A range of outbuildings are situated to the rear of the property. On the ground floor there is a large kitchen with a dining area, a staff office, toilet and lounge. The first floor has the young people's individual bedrooms and their bathroom. There are facilities on the first floor for two staff to sleep through the night.

There were three young people in residence at the time of the inspection but none were available to take part in the inspection process. There was one vacancy but the home only use this vacancy when there is a pair of siblings requiring residential care.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This unannounced interim inspection focused on the outcome achieved by the home in the staying safe group, as identified in the Every Child Matters outcome groups. Other outcomes were not assessed during this visit, as they were assessed as good when last inspected and will be the focus of the next visit to the service. The overall quality rating remains good and the staff continue to work hard, with the emphasis on keeping young people safe. Currently the setting has an acting manager in position whose application for Registered Manager is in the process of being submitted to Ofsted.

Three actions were made at this inspection relating to the investigation and recording of outcomes of any complaints made, and ensuring that safeguarding procedures are available in the home for any young person placed out of county. One recommendation was made to ensure restraint records are maintained in a bound volume as the pages are becoming unstuck and may get lost.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were no actions or recommendations made at the last inspection.

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.

The home has a good range of policies in place that address child protection, safeguarding, complaints, counteracting bullying, going missing without authority, and behaviour management. The home continues to protect young people from abuse and ensures that they live in a safe environment. Young people are well informed about how they can make a complaint, with respect to the care and support they receive. They have access to an independent advocate at any time. The home's records show that young people are confident about raising grievances that they want investigated and addressed. Staff responses, however, did not fully demonstrate that an appropriate investigation was undertaken and the records seen of any outcomes were not detailed enough.

Young people are living in an environment where bullying is positively discouraged and if incidents take place, they are dealt with immediately. There are times when young people are absent from the home without the permission of staff. Any such incidents are reported to external agencies and full and detailed records are made. Staff regularly remind young people of the risk they place themselves in and encourage them to keep in telephone contact, so that staff are kept informed of their whereabouts. Young people are assisted by staff to make positive decisions about their behaviours and actions. They are regularly rewarded for positive behaviours, through verbal praise and additional activities. Staff do use sanctions to help young people reflect on the consequences of their actions so that they learn that responses are immediate, consistent and fair. All staff receive physical intervention training and when restraints are necessary, all incidents are recorded in line with requirements. However, the binding on the restraint book is becoming unstuck and the pages may get lost.

Two of the three young people had been placed from outside the county and there was no appropriate safeguarding information accessible to staff. This may impact on the ability of staff to react promptly and appropriately to any safeguarding concerns.

The home protects and supports young people in matters related to health and safety. Staff ensure that they maintain a safe environment and that they comply with health and safety legal requirements. All young people have an individualised risk assessment so that staff are able to reduce and prevent harm for young people. All staff and young people undertake regular fire evacuation drills so they know how to respond in the event of a fire.

The staff recruitment records are held at the head office and these were not seen as

part of the inspection process. The acting manager confirmed that no staff are employed at the home without the correct and suitable level of pre-employment checks. This ensures that staff are deemed suitable to work with vulnerable young people.

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?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Std.	Action	Due date
16	ensure that there are written records of complaints recording the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation (Regulation 24(5))	26/11/2010
31	ensure all staff receive appropriate training in relation to complaint procedures (Regulation 27(4)(a))	20/12/2010
28	maintain an up-to-date copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures, which must include the up-to-date contact	08/11/2010

	details for significant people in that procedure. (Regulation 16(2)(g))	
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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 any record of the use of restraint on a young person is maintained in a bound book. (NMS 22.9)