

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC372511
Inspection date	15 October 2009
Inspector	Monica Hargreaves
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	19 May 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

This local authority home is registered to provide a short breaks service for up to five young people of either gender, who are aged between five and 17 years and who have a range of disabilities.

The accommodation is all on one level and has been adapted to provide suitable facilities for children and young people who are wheelchair users. There are five bedrooms which are used by young people, all of which have sinks, call alarm systems, television and computer points. One bedroom has a ceiling track hoist. There is a large dining room and two lounges, both of which have ample storage space for suitable play equipment and toys and there is a separate fully fitted multi-sensory room. There is one bathroom and two shower rooms which are all suitably adapted.

The home is located in an established residential area. It is detached and set in its own grounds, with sufficient safe parking for staff and visitors. The grounds have been landscaped and have suitable play equipment for disabled and able bodied young people.

Summary

This unannounced interim inspection was arranged to consider how well the service is working to safeguard young people and also to review the recommendations made at the last inspection. Key standards in Staying Safe were assessed in order to form the judgement. Due to the limited nature of this inspection, the overall judgement for the service remains as at the last inspection.

The service continues to provide a good standard of care to young people. There are effective policies and procedures in place and care practices are good, which means that young people are safe and protected from harm when they stay at the home.

A minor shortfall in recording systems has been identified at this inspection. This does not have an immediate impact on the safety and welfare of young people.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Recommendations made at the last inspection have been met.

All staff, including casual staff, are trained in child protection issues, so that they understand how to respond to safeguarding concerns and protect young people.

The manager has completed a detailed assessment of the times and places within the home where the risk of bullying is the greatest. This forms part of the structures that are in place to protect young people from bullying.

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.

Effective policies and procedures, which underpin good care practices, ensure that young people are cared for safely when they stay in the home.

The service develops robust individual risk assessment plans for young people. These plans address issues such as bullying, unauthorised absence and challenging behaviour and identify strategies for supporting young people, which protect the individual and the group. Staffing levels are good, so that young people are appropriately supervised and short stays are booked to make sure that groups of young people are compatible. This lessens the likelihood of bullying. There is a clear protocol for managing unauthorised absences, although there is evidence that there has been no incident of a young person going missing from the home since it opened.

Staff make sure that the privacy of young people is respected. They have the use of individual bedrooms where they can spend time in private and staff deliver personal care to young people in a way that promotes their personal dignity. Information about young people is stored securely, to protect their right to confidentiality.

Young people are protected from abuse because there is a sound safeguarding procedure, staff are trained to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and they have a very good understanding of their responsibilities in relation to responding to concerns.

The service has a robust complaints procedure and staff respond promptly to issues that are raised. There is good communication with parents, so that they feel able to talk to staff about any concerns they have about the care of their child. Staff communicate in a variety of ways with children who do not use speech, for example, through pictures and symbols and using their knowledge of the individual young person's body language or facial expressions. This enables staff to understand if young people are not happy with any aspect of their care and to resolve difficulties quickly. There has been one complaint to the service since the last inspection, which was dealt with appropriately.

Staff are trained to respond positively to challenging behaviour, including in the use of physical intervention. They have a very positive view of the young people they look after and work hard to encourage them to behave in a way that is socially acceptable. They recognise and reward positive behaviour and use agreed strategies to manage challenging behaviour in the least restrictive way. Records of significant incidents are kept in a bound book and the information that is kept on these incidents is clear and detailed. However, all serious or significant incidents, whether or not they lead to a restraint, are recorded in one book and the incidents themselves are not numbered. This system is not clear and does not fully meet the standard.

Young people benefit from being cared for in a home that is kept safe. Equipment is regularly checked and serviced and staff undertake risk assessments on the environment, so that hazards are minimised. Young people and staff take part in regular evacuation drills, which ensures that staff have a clear understanding of how to help young people to safety in an emergency.

All staff are vetted before they start work at the home, to ensure that they are safe to work with young people. The home itself is kept appropriately secure and visitors are checked. These systems protect 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 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):

- record all incidents of restraint in a separate dedicated bound and numbered book. (NMS 22.9)