

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Julian Parker
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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 is a small children's home that looks after one young person, aged between 10 and 18 years. It is a two-storey, detached property, in a rural setting. The nature of the home allows staff to adjust the environment and the care provided to meet the specific needs of the children and young people accommodated.

The priority for staff is to 'provide a safe, warm, nurturing and empowering environment to afford children and young people the care and control to which they are entitled at this stage in their life'. At the time of this visit one young person was living at the home who briefly contributed to the inspection process.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

The purpose of this unannounced interim inspection was to follow up the actions and recommendations made at the last inspection and to assess key standards under the staying safe outcome area.

This home provides a good level of care for children. The recommendations made at the last inspection are commented on in the improvement section of this report.

Effective safeguarding systems ensure and promote the well-being of the young people living in the home. Socially acceptable, compliant behaviour is encouraged and managed positively to ensure that children are safeguarded. Children respond positively to regular routines, consistent staffing, explicit boundaries and the rewards and incentives used in the home that support them.

The physical environment is maintained to a good, homely standard. Systems are in place to ensure regular health and safety checks are carried out.

On this inspection no actions or recommendations have been made.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the registered provider was required to introduce a system to notify the persons and appropriate authorities of the occurrence of significant events in accordance with Regulation 30. This has been introduced and an effective system including an audit trail has been put in place.

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.

In this single occupancy home young children's privacy is promoted by the provision of individual bedrooms with en-suite toileting facilities. Personal space is decorated in styles which appeal to their taste. Any room searches deemed necessary to protect the welfare of children are done in accordance with the provider's guidance and respect for children's individual safety and privacy. Children have access to a telephone but on occasion calls have to be knowingly monitored. Children are informed of the circumstances where confidential information about them is shared with third parties such as social workers and how they can also contribute to these records.

Children are regularly informed about the home's complaints system and what opportunities exist for them to raise and discuss any matter they are unhappy with. This includes one-to-one chats with key workers and contact with persons independent of the home, such as the independent advocacy service. Formal complaints are not evident but day-to-day grumbles and concerns, usually about behaviour management, are dealt with openly and effectively by the home's manager. Children are kept informed of the progress and outcomes. Due to the type of home this is, children constantly talk to staff and staff actively listen to them. Children know that staff follow up all concerns and quickly resolve their care related issues.

Staff take all reasonable steps to keep children safe from harm and know how to respond in the event of any allegation or serious concern about any aspect of safety. Safeguarding training supports staff in their work with children. All allegations are investigated thoroughly and are fully compliant with the provider's procedures and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board guidance. The particular risks of working with young people are fully evaluated by the home's risk assessments and formulated individualised behaviour management plans. Significant incident reporting triggers a review of these key documents thereby ensuring that every person involved may be better protected.

There have been no occasions where young people have been missing from the home since the last inspection. Should this occur then staff are familiar with the procedure to follow to ensure that children are reported and looked for, following nationally approved protocols. Processes have also been improved to ensure the timely notification of incidents to significant persons and agencies with responsibility for any resident child.

Staff have a good understanding about countering bullying, including on-line risks, presenting a zero tolerance approach to this type of behaviour either at the home or in the provider's education setting. Individual behavioural risk assessments identify how children may react in social or closed settings. This influences what staffing requirements are desirable to enhance individual safety and promote young people's welfare.

Children receive care from staff that are appropriately trained and understand the need to constantly encourage good behaviour. Such training also includes techniques designed to manage challenging behaviour and prevent children self harming, using a nationally accredited methodology for physical intervention. Disciplinary measures, through the rare use of sanctions, are proportionate and children generally consider them to be fair. Children like the rewards and incentives systems used in the home. The manager actively monitors sanctions and incentives, to consider their effectiveness. These are amended as necessary to provide better outcomes for the young people.

The home environment is clean and well maintained. Systems are in place to ensure appropriate health and safety checks are carried out regularly. Compliant fire and evacuation drills take place and are documented in the home's statutory records.

Since the last inspection new staff have been introduced to the home to supplement the regular staff team. The provider's recruitment system includes Criminal Records Bureau checks at enhanced level and references being scrutinised prior to employment. The manager's oversight of staff compliance and practice continues to maintain good levels of safety for 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.