

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Suzanne Young
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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 home offers medium to long-term care for three children aged between 10 years and 17 years of age who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is operated by a large national provider of children's residential care.

Children live in a detached house with a garden, on a main road, near local shopping and leisure facilities. There are three bedrooms for children, one staff sleeping room, bathrooms, a private room for small meetings and therapy on the first floor, and two separate living rooms on the ground floor. There is a kitchen/dining room and ground floor toilet and utility room.

Two young people currently live at the home. One young person contributed their views. The Registered Manager was also present.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection. All key standards under the staying safe outcome group and recommendations made at the last inspection were inspected. At the last full inspection the home was judged as good overall. Following this inspection staying safe is judged as good.

The home continues to provide an environment that is safe and secure for the young people in its care. The manager and staff have a clear focus on ensuring young people are protected.

Three minor shortfalls were identified, one relating to fire safety and two to record keeping.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection two recommendations were made. These have both been met. Employment references now indicate whether applicants are suitable to work with children. The bathroom has also been repaired and redecorated as recommended and is now fresh and welcoming.

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 provides an environment that is safe and secure and which provides good arrangements for the promotion, protection and care of young people. All staff receive child protection training and have access to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures. These ensure staff respond to allegations or suspicions of abuse appropriately. The Registered Manager has developed a good working relationship with members of the Local Safeguarding Children Board which ensures all child protection concerns are responded to and referred without delay.

Young people are further safeguarded as staff complete detailed risk assessments for each young person at the start of their placement. The manager reviews these on a monthly basis although does not always demonstrate this clearly on young people's files. Up-to-date risk assessments enable staff to be well-informed about each young person in their care ensuring safety and welfare is promoted at all times.

Staff protect young people from bullying and unauthorised absences by engaging in direct work with young people to help prevent and reduce these behaviours. Staff use conflict resolution to resolve disputes between young people. The manager has a good working relationship with local police officers who visit the home to support staff and young people.

Staff respect and promote an individual's right to privacy and confidentiality. Young people have access to a house phone on which they can contact their social workers, family and friends. There is also a telephone in the home where young people can make emergency calls in private.

Young people know how to make complaints. There have been four complaints since the last inspection. These have been dealt with appropriately and without delay.

Staff work with young people to help manage and encourage positive behaviour. Staff complete positive handling plans when young people first arrive in the home alongside care plans which are reviewed on a three-monthly basis. This helps ensure staff are fully knowledgeable about young people living in the home and are aware of how to manage behaviour appropriately. All staff receive training in physical intervention and this is updated on an annual basis. All consequences and restraints are appropriate and evaluated effectively by the Registered Manager. Records of the consequences are not, however, being kept on young people's files as required.

Health and safety systems ensure a safe home for young people to stay. Risk

assessments are completed in relation to fire and potential environmental hazards and the fire systems are tested on a regular basis. Fire evacuation drills are undertaken in excess of requirements although a night time drill has not taken place which has the potential to compromise the safety of young people and staff.

Staff recruitment records are well organised and clear. New staff do not commence employment in the home until all the relevant checks have been carried out.

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
22	ensure all records of any measures of control, restraint or discipline used on a child is included in the case records of children accommodated in the home (Regulation 28(1) Schedule 3)	31/03/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure a fire drill is held at night which includes the evacuation of staff and children from the building (NMS 26.8)
- evidence that risk assessments are reviewed on a regular basis and kept on young people's files (NMS 26.2)