

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	22 July 2010
Inspector	Dawn Taylor
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	16 December 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 home provides care and accommodation for up to two young people of either gender aged from 10 years to under 18 years. It is a small semi detached house in a village on the outskirts of a large town.

Summary

This inspection was a key, unannounced inspection visit. The outcome groups relating to being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution, economic well-being and organisation were assessed.

The young person was present and participated in the inspection process.

The overall outcome judgement is outstanding. Being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution, economic well-being and organisation were all judged to be outstanding. There are no actions or recommendations as a result of this inspection.

This company has established policies and procedures, which are underpinned by a comprehensive framework of staff training. This ensures high quality practice, which is sustained and results in robust and outstanding outcomes for young people. Young people at this home feel it is an outstanding service. Its key strengths are the professional staff team and Registered Manager who effectively promotes the individual needs of young people. They undertake excellent work with families, other people significant in the young people's lives and a wide range of agencies in the local community.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

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

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The promotion of healthy lifestyles and health matters is outstanding. Staff are excellent role models, they support young people to access a range of physical activities and hobbies and prepare nutritious, healthy meals. Young people are encouraged to be actively involved in food preparation and planning. However, the staff team demonstrate sensitive parenting skills, and balance the young people's ages and other life priorities with regard to their daily involvement.

Comprehensive information is gathered on young people's health care needs prior to their admission to the home. This enables the staff team to make timely, appropriate referrals to local health care professionals to ensure their future health care needs are met. Comprehensive company training and an informed admission process result in a knowledgeable staff team who are skilled at meeting individual's health needs. One young person stated that her health needs are being met by a 'nice team of staff who are very kind to her'.

This outstanding practice is further enhanced by the company's therapy team who undertake direct work with young people and also attend all house meetings to facilitate discussions with the staff team. The company also has established links with a local authority health care agency, which provides guidance and training to staff and young people, as well as direct confidential support to all young people with regard to relationships, sexuality and sexual health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The continuing promotion of young people's safety and wellbeing is outstanding. This service has developed strong links with neighbours and the local community police force. They have been proactively involved in hosting multi agency community events.

All staff within the company have robust training that covers all safeguarding issues. In addition, all Registered Managers have achieved their local authority's level 2 safeguarding training. This year the company are focusing on all seniors achieving their local authority's level 2 safeguarding training. The home's Registered Manager is one of two Registered Managers within the company who have qualified with the local authority to deliver this training and the company are working in partnership with the local authority to deliver safeguarding training to all childcare services in the local authority.

The professional staff team are skilled at promoting a safe environment and positive relationships with young people. For example, since the last inspection there have been no physical interventions and a minimal number of consequences. Effective communication between staff and young people enables young people to achieve outstanding results and feel 'safe and listened to'.

Records relating to staff recruitment and selection were checked at the company's headquarters in June 2010. The company's recruitment and selection process is robust and the procedure includes checks over and above those required in the Children Home's Regulations.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Young people receive an outstanding level of individual support and guidance that is consistent with their identified needs and overall plan of care.

Young people have an allocated key worker but this arrangement is not promoted to the exclusion of other staff offering support and guidance. Young people value the relationship they have with their key workers and highlight this as an aspect of the service that really helps them. Staff pay close attention to individual needs and work collaboratively with families, education and placing authorities.

Educational opportunities are outstanding and take into account each young person's current needs, as well as their potential. Young people receive excellent support and encouragement with their educational attainment. The company operates its own registered school, as well as an outdoor education department. The service will also support young people to attend mainstream schools or colleges or those who are employed or in work experience. Where appropriate the home's staff will support young people in their educational establishment. The

outstanding dialogue between the home and education reinforces to young people the high importance staff place on learning and development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Young people's views and opinions about their care are valued by the home's conscientious and child-focused staff team. Staff use a range of ways to consult with young people in the home. For example, young people have the opportunity to express their views and opinions through individual sessions with their key worker. In addition the staff team are proactive in ensuring that young people are aware that they can speak to independent agencies and professionals outside of the home. Staff demonstrate a clear commitment to promoting consultation and as a result young people feel listened to.

There are established company procedures for supporting young people to move into and leave the home. These provide staff with clear guidance and practical options that ensure the most appropriate and sensitive approach can be implemented for each individual young person depending upon their circumstance. Prior to arriving at a home detailed information is gathered from the placing authority and previous placements. This information is used by staff to inform assessments of risk and placement plans that ensure young people feel welcome and are kept safe. These are regularly reviewed and modified through the constant monitoring of young people's progress and views. Staff demonstrate thoughtful and sensitive insight into the young people for whom they provide a service.

The promotion of contact is a key strength at this home. Young people acknowledged the length the Registered Manager and staff go to ensure the involvement of family members, friends and significant others in their day-to-day lives. Staff are creative and flexible when supporting transport, organising contact visits and promoting positive relationships.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

There are effective systems in place that support each individual to develop the skills they require to move on to adulthood. It is the ethos of this home to involve every young person, whatever their age or ability, in the life of the home. When a young person begins plans to transition from the home staff are skilled at assessing individual's needs and tailoring imaginative packages to address them.

The home is welcoming and homely. Staff are proactive at supporting young people to settle in and make it feel their home. There is an on going programme of work that ensures the high standard is not just maintained but is also improved. For example, additional parking spaces have been created through widening the driveway.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

This home has substantial strengths and has a sustained record of delivering outstanding practice and managing effective performance. Where areas for improvement emerge the Registered Manager recognises and manages them well. The commitment shown by the staff team results in holistic, child centred practice that ensures young people have positive life experiences and achieve strong outcomes.

The home's statement of purpose, young person's guide and policies and procedures provide a significant range of information about service and arrangements for young people's care. The home is effectively managed and this is having a positive impact on the outcomes for young people. Staff are well informed of the principles and aims of the home and are positive and enthusiastic about their work.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. There are comprehensive policies and procedural guidance for staff on anti-bullying, anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice and equal opportunities. The Registered Manager proactively supports his staff team to develop each young person's self esteem by creating an environment where it is safe to learn and make mistakes. A key strength of this service is the inherent respect that exists between the staff and young people.

A key strength of the company are the monthly monitoring visits. These are carried out without fail and include the views of young people. The reports are valued by the Registered Manager who finds them insightful and uses them to inform the home's quality assurance system and development plan.

The staff team maintain detailed records. Staff have access to all information pertaining to the young people about their history and progress, which matches the necessary requirements set out in legislation.

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 Children's 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

There are no recommendations.