

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	2 February 2010
Inspector	Shaun Common
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	17 September 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

The children's home provides accommodation for one young person of either sex from 10 years to 17 years of age. The home is in a private housing estate and is similar to other properties in the area. It has three bedrooms. One bedroom is dedicated for a young person, another is a sleep-in room for staff and the third bedroom is currently spare. There is access to local bus routes, and a health centre is a short journey away as are shops and local amenities. The home has a fitted kitchen, a utility room, a bathroom, a separate toilet, an office area and gardens to the front and rear of the property.

One young person lives at the home and was present during the inspection.

Summary

This interim inspection assessed the progress of the home with the statutory requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection. These related to monitoring systems, safe recruitment, revising procedures and information about the home. They also related to provision of healthy food, decoration and health and safety matters, training for staff and consultation processes.

The inspection assessed all key standards in the outcome areas of staying safe and economic wellbeing. The inspection assessed progress of the home with the statutory requirements and recommendations in the areas of being healthy, positive contribution and organisation. The inspection did not assess outcomes in the area of enjoying and achieving. The home has strength in positive behaviour management. It needs to improve in staff training and safe recruitment, monitoring processes and in the overall environment. It also needs to improve a number of procedures and risk assessments.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The registered persons were asked at the last inspection to make a number of improvements in the home. They were asked to revise information about the home, provide healthy nutritious food for young people and address a number of health and safety related matters. They were also asked to consult young people, parents and placing authorities about things that affect young people's care. These matters have been addressed and help to keep young people safe, promote their health and wellbeing and their rights.

The registered persons were asked at the last inspection to ensure staff receive all required training, follow safe recruiting procedures and ensure all parts of the home are well decorated and maintained. They were also asked to undertake robust monitoring, revise a number of policies and procedures and risk assessments. These matters have not been addressed and further statutory requirements and recommendations will be raised in this report in relation to these issues.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people are provided with food that is wholesome, nutritious and suitable for their needs.

The homes' medication policy has not been revised to guide staff in how medication should be stored. This will ensure medication is not stored with other unsuitable items that could cause it to be spoiled or contaminated and hence be unsuitable for young people.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people are provided with privacy and their information is stored securely. This promotes and protects their rights. There is a freely accessible telephone, so young people can keep in touch with people important to them. The home has in place a record for any searches of young people's possessions. There have been no entries since the last inspection.

Information about complaints is available to young people so they have access to a system that promotes and protects their rights. However, they are not provided with sufficient and full information. The home has a complaints procedure that is understood by staff so they can support young people, however, not all staff have received training to help them better support young people. A record is in place for any complaints that are made. No complaints have been made since the last inspection. A compliment has been received about the care provided.

A copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board's procedures and the home's own child protection procedure are accessible to staff in the home. Staff understand the procedures to be followed should there be an allegation or suspicion of abuse. This helps them to keep young people safe.

The home has a policy and procedure regarding countering bullying, which is accessible to staff to help them protect young people. A procedure is in place regarding absence of any young person without authority. However, it does not include the young person being seen by someone independent of the home, to consider why they were absent. Staff understand the procedure, which helps them to safeguard young people. The home has a record for the purpose of recording any such incidents. There have been no absences since the last inspection.

The home has in place behaviour management policies to support staff in delivering positive care in this area. There have been no sanctions or restraints recorded since the last inspection. The manager stated this is due to the strong ethos the home has of working positively with young people.

Risk assessments that relate to young people's known and likely activities are in place and help to safeguard them. However, the home's records do not identify the likelihood or severity in these risk assessments, so appropriate control measures can be put in place. All staff and the young person have participated in a fire drill so they know what to do to stay safe. Other health and safety matters have been undertaken and help to keep young people safe, such as regular checks and maintenance are carried out on portable electrical appliances, the gas boiler, fire equipment and a fire risk assessment is in place and is up-to-date.

The home has in place recruitment procedures and full information that ensures staff they employ are the right people to work with children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff at the home keep in touch with parents and social workers of young people accommodated, where appropriate, to ensure they are kept up-to-date with progress and can provide their views of care provided.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is satisfactory.

The home has in place a pathway plan provided by the placing authority and a leaving care plan. These set out the support and assistance the young person needs for the transition to adulthood. Limited work has been undertaken with the young person in this area.

The children's home provides a satisfactory environment conducive to the care of young people. Areas of the home are exhibiting wear and tear and are in need of attention, such as floor coverings and décor throughout.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Information that describes the home and the services it provides is in place and accurate. This helps young people and others understand what they can expect from the home.

Staff have received training in most areas, which helps them to deliver care to young people. However, they have not received training in complaints so they can fully support young people. Not all permanently appointed staff are subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation. This means they may not be assessed as suitable to work with young people.

Internal monitoring of the home takes place each month as required; all matters are recorded as being monitored and where there are shortfalls, improvement to provision for young people is made. The reports do not consider the views of young people, parents and placing authorities to assist improvement in the home.

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
24	ensure all parts of the children's home are kept in good repair internally and are reasonably decorated and maintained (Regulation 31)	31 March 2010

31	ensure that all staff receive appropriate training in complaints; provide evidence of all training undertaken (Regulation 27)	31 March 2010
31	ensure that all permanent appointments are subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation; provide evidence on individuals files that this is the case for all employees (Regulation 27)	31 March 2010
33	ensure the system for monitoring matters set out in Schedule 6, provides for specific consultation with children, parents and placing authorities. (Regulation 34)	28 February 2010

Recommendations

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

- revise and implement the medication policy to ensure the home provides suitable and hygienic storage for all medications that does not involve storage alongside other items that are not medicines (NMS 13)
- revise the complaints procedure and information provided to children to include a summary of the matters set out in NMS 16 (NMS 16)
- revise the absence without authority procedure so it considers the matter set out in NMS 19.4 (NMS 19)
- revise risk assessments to include a measure of likelihood and severity. (NMS 26)