

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC378407
Inspection date	25/11/2010
Inspector	Shaun Common
Type of inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	02/02/2010
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2010

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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

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, but was not present during the inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This unannounced key inspection looked at all key standards and examined all outcome areas.

This children's home is a good service. It has strengths in promoting the health needs of young people, positive behaviour management, supporting young people to achieve their potential in education and in the individual support young people receive from staff.

Improvement is needed in revising all risk assessments to include likelihood and severity and in revising the medication and absence without authority policies to include all relevant matters.

Improvements since the last inspection

The registered persons were asked at the last inspection to make a number of improvements at the home. They were asked to ensure all parts of the home are reasonably decorated, ensure staff undertake training in complaints and provide evidence of completion of staff probation periods. They were also asked to ensure monitoring includes consultation and to revise complaints information given to young people. All these matters have been addressed and ensures improved care for young people.

The registered persons were also asked to revise the medication and absence policies and that risk assessments contain likelihood and severity. These issues have not been addressed. Recommendations will be made in this report.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Menus show that young people are offered a varied, healthy and balanced diet to aid their wellbeing and development. The manager has contacted a local health professional to assist in the development of menus. Staff record what young people actually eat so diet and intake can be monitored. Young people are encouraged to shop with staff and get involved in preparing snacks and meals. Staff are trained in safe food handling and hygiene, which ensures food is prepared in a safe way.

Health plans for young people set out their holistic assessed needs. Plans are clear and kept up to date. Records show that young people access all essential basic health care services such as dentist, doctors and opticians. They also have access to wider professional health services as required. Health promotion matters are part of the home's agenda. Staff ensure young people have access to information and advice on matters such as sexual health, smoking, alcohol and substance misuse.

Medication is stored securely, which helps to keep young people safe. The home's policy on medication has not yet been revised. It does not include ensuring medications are not stored alongside other items that are not medicines that may compromise hygiene. Records of all medications are kept. They are clear, accurate and have an audit trail. This demonstrates young people get the medication they need, when they need it, in order to stay healthy. Consent is in place for any treatments including homely remedies and first aid where needed. This ensures the risk of any adverse reactions to any treatment is reduced.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people are afforded privacy and have access to a telephone to keep in touch with people important to them. Their information is stored securely, which protects their rights. A policy is in place regarding when it may be necessary to search a young person's possessions. Records show that no searches have been carried out.

A complaints procedure and information for young people is available in the home. This promotes and protects their rights. Information for young people has recently been revised to include all relevant matters and it is in a suitable format. A record is kept for any complaints that are made. There have been none since the last inspection. Staff are trained in the home's complaints procedures and know how to support young people.

A copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and the home's own child protection procedures are available and accessible to staff. Staff understand these procedures and know what to do to protect young people if there ever was an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Staff have undergone training in child protection to support them in their work. There have been no child protection referrals since the

last inspection.

A bullying policy is in place to underpin staff practice. The home provides single placements and therefore bullying between children is not an issue. Staff are trained in countering bullying, which helps them support young people fully.

There have been no absences of young people without authority since the last inspection. A record is in place for such matters as required. A procedure is in place for staff to follow and they demonstrate a sound understanding of this procedure, which helps them safeguard young people. However, the procedure does not include all required matters, some of which are important in ensuring young people's rights are promoted and they are afforded robust safeguards.

A range of policies are in place regarding behaviour management. These help to guide staff practice in their care of young people. Staff's relationships with young people are focused on positive behaviour management with an emphasis on rewards and reinforcement. This helps young people to develop socially. Records are in place for any sanctions or restraints, though there have been none since the last inspection.

Health and safety matters are managed well and help to keep young people safe. A range of risk assessments are in place for example for the premises, grounds, individual activities and for young people's likely and known activities. Although most risk assessments contain likelihood and severity that ensures clarity with control measures and improve safeguards for young people, individual risk assessments for young people do not contain these matters. Other health and safety matters are also managed well such as maintenance of fire equipment, portable electric appliances and gas installations. Fire tests and drills are carried out regularly and are recorded. All staff and young people are involved in these, which ensures they know what to do to keep themselves safe.

Recruitment procedures and processes are robust. All required information is in place before any individual starts work at the home. This ensures that those employed are the right people to work with children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young people are provided with very good individualised support in line with their assessed needs. Care planning reflects young people's assessed needs and how staff will provide advice, support and guidance. Recorded evidence determines young people have received information, advice and guidance on matters such as sexual health, smoking and substance misuse and have access to relevant professionals for more complex support needs.

A policy is in place that underpins staff practices on how the home will promote young people's education. Care plans, personal education plans, statements of

special educational needs and other records show what support is needed and how it will be provided. Staff work closely with educational professionals to ensure young people get good advice, guidance and assistance in order to achieve their potential. Records show what progress young people have made and their achievements. Staff celebrate awards and achievements with young people.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young people's needs are assessed from a range of background information and a care plan is developed to meet those needs. Care plans are robust and clear and are shared with young people. They are regularly reviewed and kept up to date. Keyworkers provide young people with regular individual time to attain support, advice and guidance. Statutory reviews of care plans are carried out within timescales and young people are encouraged to attend to give their views. Contact arrangements are clear and young people are supported to keep in touch with people important to them.

An admissions policy is in place for staff to follow. Young people are given good information on admission and supported by staff to settle into the home and its routines. Young people are able to bring their possessions with them to the home.

Young people and their placing authorities are regularly asked about their views of the home. Young people have regular time with their keyworker and can approach any staff member to voice any concerns or talk about their care. The home keeps in regular contact with placing social workers and ascertains their views of the care of young people in order to improve the care provided.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Young people at the home are not yet of an age where formal leaving care planning is required. Staff encourage young people to engage in household chores, preparing basic snacks and meals and other matters that enable the development of skills needed for adulthood.

The home provides a good environment that is conducive to the positive care of young people. The home is well furnished and decorated throughout.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Good information is available to young people, parents and professionals about the services the home provides and what to expect. Information is kept up to date and is provided in a suitable format.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Young people's individual needs are assessed, planned for and met. Young people are treated fairly, have access to complaints information and are supported to maintain links with their home areas and culture. Staff educate young people in a range of matters and provide them with information. They afford young people the chance to engage in various activities that develop their understanding of different cultures, religions and ways of life.

Staff understand young people's needs well. They are mostly qualified and have undertaken a range of training that helps them provide a good level of support and care to young people. Staff files evidence that they are subject to the completion of a satisfactory probationary period before permanent appointment. The rota shows that there are always sufficient staff on duty to care for young people.

External monitoring of the home takes place each month as required. Reports are provided in a timely manner to the home and the regulatory body. Reports cover required matters and contain issues that helps the registered person improve the quality of care.

Internal monitoring of the home takes place each month and covers all required matters. Monitoring by the Registered Manager is robust and ensures that any shortfalls identified are addressed. Consultation with young people and placing authorities forms a part of this monitoring process.

Young people's records contain all required information. This means they can make sense of their care at the home and their history.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

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 absence without authority procedure so it considers the matter set out in NMS 19.4 (NMS 19)
- revise risk assessments relating to young people's known and likely activities to include a measure of likelihood and severity. (NMS 26)