

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	23 March 2010
Inspector	Suzanne Young
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	7 October 2009
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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 Cripins, 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 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 is operated by the local authority and forms part of the council's portfolio of services for children and families. The home provides care for up to two young people of either gender, aged between 10 and 18 years who have emotional or behavioural difficulties. The home aims to provide a safe and caring environment to enable young people to address some of their issues, which in turn will allow them to progress in their daily lives and in education, encouraging them to live and share family values.

The home is a three bedroom property with a large garden to the rear and a small garden at the front. It is situated in a quiet cul-de-sac, close to local amenities, bus routes and also the countryside.

Summary

This was an unannounced interim inspection. The home received a full inspection in October 2009. This visit concentrated on the Every Child Matters outcome area for staying safe and any recommendations made at the last inspection. Both young people living in the home participated in the inspection process.

At the last full inspection the home was judged as good overall. All outcome areas were judged as good with the exception of enjoying and achieving which was considered satisfactory. Following this inspection staying safe is judged as being satisfactory.

The home continues to provide an environment that promotes young people's welfare. Good systems are in place to safeguard young people although some shortfalls are identified in relation to procedures being implemented appropriately and risk assessments being updated to reflect current risk. Failure to do these can compromise the care afforded to young people and have a detrimental effect on their safety and welfare.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection the provider received two recommendations. These have all been complied with. Records of restraints are able to demonstrate an evaluation of their appropriateness and effectiveness. Young people now have an opportunity to have their views recorded and to sign their name in the record of all restraints and sanctions.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The home provides a secure environment that promotes young people's privacy and welfare. Protective systems are in place which helps protect young people from bullying behaviour and unauthorised absences. Staff act appropriately to any instances of bullying or unauthorised

absences and work with young people and external agencies when required to address these issues.

Staff receive training in safeguarding and Local Safeguarding Board Procedures are readily accessible to staff. Procedures, however, are not always being implemented appropriately, in particular when the Registered Manager is absent from the home. Staff complete risk assessments for young people which include all areas of known risk. These, however, are not always updated to reflect current identified risk. Failure to implement procedures and update risk assessments to reflect identified risk has the potential to compromise the care afforded to young people and have a detrimental effect on their safety and welfare.

Young people's privacy is respected within the home. Staff negotiate the boundaries between respecting young people's privacy and the need to keep themselves safe.

Young people know how to complain and procedures are complied with. They are confident that staff listen and take appropriate action when necessary. Young people are encouraged to raise grumbles with staff so that such issues can be considered and resolved at an early stage. The home also has systems in place for managing more serious complaints.

The home has received several compliments from social workers and other professionals thanking staff for their hard work. Young people also feel staff are generally fair in their approach to them and care for them well.

Staff help young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive responses to inappropriate behaviour. Young people understand what is expected of them and they are rewarded for good behaviour. Behaviour management plans are developed which work alongside young people's placement plans and risk assessments. There are no records of physical intervention being used since the last inspection and records of sanctions indicate they are being used appropriately and are not excessive. Records pertaining to sanctions are detailed although the effectiveness of sanctions imposed are not always recorded. This has the potential for sanctions being imposed which have little effect on behaviour. Staff receive training in behaviour management which includes the safe use of physical restraint.

The home has effective systems in place to monitor and maintain good standards of health and safety. This ensures young people live in a home where their health and safety is fully protected. Staff receive training in fire safety and risk assessments are completed in relation to fire and potential environmental hazards. All the fire systems are tested regularly and fire evacuation drills are undertaken in excess of requirements.

Staff personnel files are not available in the home as vetting procedures are managed centrally.

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 meets the Care Standards Act 2000, The Childrens Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
17	ensure staff follow the home's policies and procedures in the event of any allegation of abuse or neglect.(Regulation 16(1)(b))	30 April 2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure risk assessments are carried out and are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current concern (NMS 26.2)
- ensure all records of sanctions include their effectiveness. (NMS 22.10)