

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC381339
Inspection date	9 August 2010
Inspector	Stella Henderson
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	25 May 2010
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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 is purpose built and provides accommodation for up to six young people of either sex from 10 years old up to 17 years old at any one time. The home is detached and is suitably adapted to meet the needs, if these arise, of young people with a disability.

The ground floor has a lounge, a computer room with internet access, a dining room and a kitchen. The first floor consists of young people's bedrooms and a staff sleep-in room. Bathrooms and toilets are located on both floors. Off road parking is available for up to six vehicles. The home is close to local transport routes and local amenities.

Two young people contributed their views to this inspection.

Summary

This truncated key inspection was undertaken following an inadequate judgement at the last inspection.

Since the last inspection, substantial improvement has been made overall and the actions taken to address shortfalls have been implemented promptly. Practice has improved particularly with regard to monitoring, the supervision of staff and recording.

Staff are more task-focused in their approach to caring for young people, while still providing care that is nurturing and enables young people to form positive attachments. Young people are safeguarded, and the issue of bullying and risk assessments, raised as concerns at the last inspection, has been fully addressed.

Young people were on holiday at the time of this inspection.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Several actions were made at the last inspection. This included reference to leaving care plans and ensuring medication logs were accurate. Improvement was also required with regard to risk assessments, bullying, complaints, staff support and monitoring of the home's performance.

Recommendations were made in relation to room searches, privacy and confidentiality, and leadership of the home. Evidence from this inspection demonstrates that these requirements and recommendations have now been met.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young people continue to benefit from being cared for by staff who promote their health and well-being. They are supported to develop a positive attitude to healthy eating and are encouraged to plan and choose meals that are healthy, nutritious and that they will enjoy.

Staff support young people to access primary and specialist health care services and are pro-active in enabling young people to desist engaging in activities that may be harmful to their health. Staff receive first aid training and a first aid box is to hand.

Young people are safeguarded by improved practice around medication. Staff have received refresher training on the administration and recording of any medicines kept at the home. The medicine cabinet is secure and provides safe storage for medication.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people are protected by improved safeguarding practice. Staff have discussed the complaints procedure which has resulted in clearer responses to and better recording of complaints. This means that young people can now be confident of prompt action and follow up.

Bullying has been fully addressed with young people. Risk assessments have been updated accordingly and key working sessions are undertaken with the young people concerned. Young people themselves have been pro-active in addressing this issue, with the use of art work and peer awareness raising. Staff have also revisited the bullying policy and procedure and are now clear about their responsibilities in this area.

Young people continued to be safeguarded in relation to any episodes of missing from home, including the convening strategy meetings where necessary. Promoting positive behaviours continues to be managed well, with strategies and responses based on the individual needs of young people, and taking into account their age and understanding.

Young people's privacy is respected and their personal information is kept safe. Improvements have been made to the practice of room searches to ensure that young people are not exposed to items which may cause them harm. Staff have also been reminded about the need to ensure that young people's right to confidentiality is maintained.

Suitable risk assessments have been undertaken for all known or likely behaviours. There is good practice in keeping the environment safe for young people with regular fire drills and equipment testing.

No new members of staff have been employed at the home since the last inspection. Personnel records were, therefore, not checked on this occasion but previous inspection reports indicate that all necessary checks are carried out on new staff. This ensures that young people are not exposed to those who are unsuitable to work with vulnerable groups.

Young people are safeguarded as the provider invokes disciplinary proceedings and ensures that employment is terminated where there is unsuitable practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young people have effective placement plans and receive good individual support from key workers. Staff use a range of interventions to raise young people's confidence, self-esteem and coping mechanisms. There are effective links with other agencies which provide support for young people, such as health and education.

Young people receive good levels of support in securing appropriate educational resources. Alternative options are explored for those not in mainstream education and learning opportunities are structured into their individual placement plans. Young people have a range of activities to choose from during the summer break, and were enjoying a group holiday at the time of this inspection.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The home continues to provide young people with a clear plan of how their needs will be met in placement. Young people have an input into care planning and review processes. Arrangements for contact are managed well, with appropriate safeguarding measures in place where necessary.

Frequent dialogue with young people means that there is a regular exchange of views between staff and young people, both on day-to-day and long-term decisions. Evidence from team meetings, key working sessions and daily recording demonstrates that young people have ample opportunity to discuss their feelings and concerns with staff, as well as on the running of the home.

Staff ensure that when young people arrive at the home they are made to feel welcome and are provided with information about how the home is run and what they can expect. All admissions to and discharges from the home are suitably recorded.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people who are eligible have begun pathway planning in anticipation of leaving care. The majority of the work to support young people prepare for leaving care is undertaken by the home. Young people are provided with opportunities to prepare for eventual independence as the teaching of life skills is integrated in the daily routine at the home.

Key working sessions are also effective in helping young people deal with specific issues, such as completing application forms and acquiring practical skills. Young people are supported to make their own decisions and choices, but staff are mindful of any safeguarding issues that need to be taken into account.

Young people live in a home which has sufficient space to meet their needs. The home is suitably furnished and both the interior and exterior of the home are maintained in a reasonable state of structural and decorative repair.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

A range of mechanisms to support staff in their work, such as supervision and refresher training, have been strengthened. The manager has taken a more robust approach to providing clear leadership to the team, and monitoring of the service has been greatly improved. These changes in practice ensure that young people continue to enjoy good standards of care and positive outcomes.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Young people receive a service designed to meet their diverse needs, as is evidenced by the detailed level of care planning and the response

to changing individual need. The team has a good balance of age, ethnicity and gender, and young people are made aware of the celebrations and festivities of their own and other communities.

Secure arrangements are in place for files and records and young people's individual progress and achievements are recorded in line with regulations. The home fulfils its Statement of Purpose in terms of admissions and services provided. Sufficient numbers of staff are available at all times and staffing levels take into account the need to safeguard and monitor the activities of young people.

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
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Recommendations

There are no recommendations.