

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC386430
Inspection date	28/03/2011
Inspector	Paula Lahey
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	27/10/2010
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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 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 home provides accommodation for up to two young people of either sex, aged between 10 and 17 years, who may have emotional or behavioural difficulties. It is a detached property set in a rural location. On the ground floor there is a lounge, kitchen, laundry facilities and a shower room with toilet. On the first floor there are two individual bedrooms, an office with sleeping-in facilities, a second staff sleeping-in room and the young people's bathroom.

There is a garden to the front and rear of the house. Young people at the home have access to private car transport, and the home is within easy reach of several towns, where there are facilities for sports and other activities.

The company provides education through contracted services from another private provider, who operates a small specialist school approximately 20 miles away.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an unannounced, interim inspection which looked at the staying safe outcome group and at the four recommendations made at the previous inspection.

The home continues to provide a good standard of care to young people. This is underpinned by a consistent and well trained staff team, who are committed to supporting young people to achieve positive outcomes. One young person spoken with said that they liked the home but would prefer it was placed closer to their home area.

Good progress has been made since the key inspection in October 2010, and all of the recommendations raised have been fully addressed. Two new recommendations have been made in respect of recording sanctions.

Improvements since the last inspection

Four recommendations were made previously; they have all been fully addressed.

The Registered Manager has supported young people to make a successful transition into adulthood by ensuring that they have comprehensive leaving care plans and pathway plans.

Young people's files now contain all of the information held in Schedule 3 of the Children's Homes Regulations, including a signed agreement to place the child at the

home. The Registered Manager has ensured that any restrictions on a young person's contact with others is agreed by the person with parental responsibility and recorded on file.

Medication records are detailed and accurate to the medication held in the home.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The safety of young people is promoted by good practice and procedures that are known to and followed by staff.

The staff team respect young people's privacy by knocking on doors and calling out before entering, and all young people are encouraged to respect each others privacy. Room searches are conducted rarely and confidential files and data are kept securely. Where placement plans allow, young people are supported to maintain contact with friends and family through the provision of their own mobile telephone. Credit is available from a suitable weekly allowance which is in addition to pocket and reward money.

Complaints are appropriately handled and recorded. Young people are provided with an easy to understand complaints guide, individual forms and availability of raising complaints with senior managers and external organisations. The home has not received any complaints from young people or others.

The team receive regular safeguarding training; this includes child protection and absence without authority. Staff are clear about reporting procedures and there is evidence that any concerns are treated seriously and in a timely manner. The home has not made any child protection referrals. Young people who are absent without authority are supported by staff who quickly respond to protect their safety. This includes carrying out searches of the local area and immediately reporting concerns to the local police team. Young people are able to discuss reasons for being absent with a person independent of the home.

Young people have detailed individual risk assessments and behaviour management plans in place; these are reviewed regularly to ensure they address current needs and are shared with those who have parental authority.

The team are committed to developing young people's rights and responsibilities and there is an emphasis on promoting positive behaviour. Boundaries are fair, age appropriate and produced based on young people's individual needs. Staff are

consistent in their approach, young people are rewarded for achieving agreed targets and maintaining acceptable behaviour through the use of praise and monetary incentives.

Sanctions are appropriately documented, however, the bound book does not have numbered pages, and young people's responses to sanctions are not formally recorded.

Staff receive appropriate physical intervention training and ensure that techniques used are risk assessed, documented and consistent with current good practice guidance. Restraint of young people is rare. Records are comprehensive and allow for analysis when needed.

Positive steps are taken to keep young people, staff and visitors safe from risk of fire and other hazards. Health and safety requirements are in place. The home has robust fire safety systems, fire drills occur regularly and young people and staff are clear about their responsibilities.

Staff have not been recruited since the last inspection when robust procedures were checked to ensure only suitable persons are employed in the home. Visitors to the home are required to provide identification before entry and there is a book in place to record any visitors to the home.

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?

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the pages of the central sanction log are numbered (NMS 22.10)
- ensure that a written record of young people's views on sanctions are recorded in the home. (NMS 22.14)