

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	21 April 2010
Inspector	Norma Welsby
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	10 November 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

This service is a private children's home, registered to care for up to two children between the ages of 10 years and 17 years of age.

The property is a large terraced house, domestic in character and well maintained. There are four bedrooms located on the first floor; two are used by young people and two by sleeping-in night staff. There is a bathroom, with shower facility, and a separate toilet. The office is situated on the ground floor, along with the lounge, kitchen and separate dining room.

Throughout, the property is comfortable, domestic and homely. There is good access to a wide range of local amenities, which are used routinely by young people and staff. The home also has its own vehicle which enables the young person to access facilities further afield.

Young people were present during this unannounced visit and participated in the inspection.

Summary

At this unannounced interim inspection staying safe and organisation are examined and both are judged good. The three actions made at the last key inspection in November 2009 were also discussed and good progress has been made. This demonstrates that the manager is responsive to taking appropriate action if shortfalls are identified, enabling the service to further improve outcomes for young people. This inspection results in one recommendation.

The service continues to work positively with young people to keep them safe. Staff support young people to develop better self-awareness of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. There is a stable management team, with supportive external links. Staffing is flexibly arranged to best meet the changing needs of young people. Internal quality monitoring processes are good and matters are quickly followed up.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last key inspection three actions were made, each of which related to recording and notification. The service has responded very positively to these actions and these are now met. This has helped to further improve the quality of provision and outcomes for children and young people.

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 service has policies and procedures in place to ensure that young people are safe. Staff work hard to encourage young people to develop personal responsibility for their own safety and wellbeing.

Staff promote the privacy of young people well and respect the right of young people to have information treated confidentially. Young people also receive support and guidance about how to protect their own personal details and issues of confidentiality.

The home has an established complaints procedure and this is well known to the young people. Young people are confident with raising any concerns with staff. Staff work hard to establish an open and positive rapport with young people and to encourage mutual respect for each other. This means that any issues can be raised more easily and resolved quickly.

Comprehensive child protection procedures are in place and staff demonstrate good awareness of the action they would need to take in the event of any issues arising. Ongoing staff training is provided and important issues such as safeguarding are routinely discussed in staff meetings.

Young people are aware of the policy to counter bullying and know that bullying is not acceptable. Staff ensure that young people are provided with written information and have access to helpline telephone numbers. The service demonstrates a sound knowledge of the many forms that bullying can take, including internet bullying. This awareness means that young people are better protected but also have an opportunity to develop a better understanding of less obvious forms of bullying. This helps young people to manage potentially difficult situations and keep themselves safe.

The service has good individual risk assessments in respect of young people absconding from the home, along with agreed protocols of the action staff must take. Records relating to specific recent incidents are satisfactory. Staff enable young people to access independent specialist workers who engage with them to identify and discourage behaviours that places themselves at risk. Key workers also discuss issues relating to such incidents in key work sessions. This provides young people with opportunities to explore reasons for their behaviour and more positive action they could take.

Young people are encouraged to develop socially acceptable behaviour through clear and consistent staff guidance and boundaries. Relationships between staff and young people are excellent. They are based on honesty and mutual respect and young people know the standard of behaviour expected from them. Staff use a system of consequences and incentives to encourage young people to develop acceptable behaviour. Records relating to reparation do not provide full details of the initial agreed amount to be repaid or confirmation that it has been repaid in full. There are detailed risk assessments in place that are reviewed and updated monthly. The home's policy regarding physical intervention is based primarily on de-escalation techniques. All staff have recently had refresher training. There have been no incidents of restraint used in respect of young people currently living at the service.

The home is well maintained, comfortable and domestic. There is a rolling programme of routine maintenance, servicing and health and safety checks. Young people are involved in fire safety procedures and there is a no smoking policy in operation.

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 good.

This is a well managed service that provides young people with a comfortable and nurturing environment.

The service has a written Statement of Purpose and a separate service user guide. These are informative and are kept up-to-date. Following an action made at the key inspection in November 2009, admission and discharge information is now satisfactorily maintained.

There is a full staffing complement, flexibly deployed to meet the needs of young people. The staff team are highly motivated and committed to achieving good outcomes for young people in their care. Regular supervision, staff meetings and management meetings take place. A comprehensive rolling programme of training is provided, including National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ). This means that young people are supported by staff who are suitably trained and experienced. There have been recent improvements in staff training records, both in respect of evidencing training that has been provided and in identifying timescales for refresher training.

The Registered Manager was approved during the summer of 2009. The manager has just completed the NVQ level 4 in Leadership and Management and is awaiting feedback that she has successfully passed this qualification.

There are good quality monitoring processes taking place at this service. This means that young people benefit from a service that has the capacity to review its standards and make improvements. The Registered Manager undertakes a monthly quality audit and is line managed by an area manager who also has responsibility for quality monitoring visits. Regulation 33 visits are routinely undertaken. These are comprehensive and following an action made at the last key inspection these reports are now forwarded to Ofsted.

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

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

- ensure records relating to reparation include the duration of the reparation and the signature of a person authorised by the registered person to make the record (NMS 22.9 and 22.10).