

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Chris Fuller
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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 is registered to provide care and accommodation for two children of either sex aged between 10 and 17 years with emotional and behavioural difficulties. All young people are placed in the home by the local authority in which the home is situated.

The home supports young people until they move into more independent living accommodation or are able to return to their family home.

The home is a three bedroom semi-detached house, situated on a housing estate in a quiet cul-de-sac, within easy reach of bus routes to a town centre. It has a garden to the rear of the property and a driveway to the front for parking.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This unannounced, interim inspection was made to monitor the key national minimum standards in the outcome area of staying safe. The requirements from the previous inspection were also monitored. The provider has addressed the three recommendations, in respect of menu records, bathroom door locks and pre-admission assessment information as identified at the previous inspection.

The inspection found that the outcome area of staying safe was outstanding. The management and staff are dedicated to developing and improving service delivery. Young people's health and safety are given high priority so that they are given every opportunity to reach their full potential. The management promote an open creative child-centred service where young people enjoy the benefits of a small home with a pleasant homely atmosphere. Staff are well motivated and enthusiastic and achieve an exceptionally high quality of care for young people. There are no actions or recommendations being set as a result of this visit.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were three recommendations made at the previous inspection in respect of improving the records of individual diets, ensuring the bathroom can be opened safely from the outside in an emergency and obtaining better assessment information prior to admitting a young person.

Progress has been made with all of these recommendations being met. Staff and young people have developed a folder with an image of a healthy plate to prompt and promote healthy dietary choices. A written record is kept of both the planned

menus and the actual food eaten. The bathroom door locks have been changed so that they are both practical and secure providing privacy for the young person while allowing the staff to gain access in an emergency. Pre-placement information has been obtained and includes an effective assessment of each young person's needs prior to admission to the home. This information includes an up-to-date core assessment, detailed chronology and any assessments completed by other professionals. This means staff have access to the required information about the young person's assessed needs so that placement plans can effectively outline how these needs can be met.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Staff practice demonstrates that they fully respect the privacy and dignity of young people and their views are always given consideration. The privacy and confidentiality of young people is promoted exceptionally well by effective implementation of comprehensive policies and procedures. Young people know what levels of privacy and confidentiality they can expect and say that staff always keep to these. Staff consistently encourage young people to respect each other's private space and belongings. In addition, staff access community resources, services and events to broaden young people's social experiences and engage them in the local community. This also helps them to understand public and private information, space and activities.

Young people know how to complain. They are confident that their concerns and complaints are, and always would be, addressed very well by all staff. Young people always receive feedback about the outcome of their complaint and are encouraged to add their comments to the outcome of the complaint. Staff consistently encourage young people to raise any issues or concerns through very effective formal and informal communication systems, including contact with external independent people or agencies such as, independent advocacy services. Young people are given opportunities to express their views and raise concerns in both private and public forums so that they develop self-confidence to express their views and see that they are taken seriously.

Young people are protected from abuse by robust, comprehensive, clear and well implemented policies, procedures and guidance for responding to all safeguarding practices in respect of child protection, countering bullying, absence of a child without authority and notification of significant events. All staff complete safeguarding training and demonstrate a very clear understanding of the vulnerability of young people in their care. Young people know very well what information staff

can and cannot keep confidential and staff always tell them to whom they will pass their concerns. Young people are involved in their care plan reviews, education planning and similar meetings with other professionals such as local community police and specialist health agencies. Management and staff give high priority to effective liaison and networking through multi-agency meetings to promote the protection of young people and enhance their health and welfare.

Young people confirm that they feel safe within the home. They know the home's policy and procedures about bullying. Staff act immediately on any information that might suggest that bullying is taking place; whether this is in the home or outside the home. They deal very effectively with issues such as insults relating to race, disability, culture, gender and sexual orientation. Staff state there are no problems at the present time with bullying due to the mix and age of the young people. Young people are always encouraged to talk to staff about any concerns about education or in the community.

Staff have produced detailed individual risk assessments and plans for what to do should each child or young person go missing. The risk assessment and plan are reviewed after each time a young person is absent without authority or goes missing. Management regularly review and monitor records for patterns and trends so that suitable strategies can be developed to reduce absence and engage young people in alternative constructive lifestyle choices. Profiles of young people's networks, social contacts, family and friends are mapped to facilitate effective liaison and searches. High priority is given to building relationships with young people and maintaining contact at all times with effective use of mobile phones where this is appropriate and constructive. Staff always go out to look for young people who are missing. They make arrangements to collect the child or young person when they are found and give a warm welcome when they return. Staff encourage young people to discuss what happened with a member of staff of their choice. Notifications are sent in a timely manner to all the relevant people and appropriate authorities.

Management and staff are highly motivated and demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment to keeping young people safe, promoting their welfare and enabling them to manage their own behaviour and reduce risk factors in their lives. High priority is given to the matching of young people in placements which again reduces risk factors and facilitates better outcomes for young people. A small dedicated group of skilled experienced staff provides stability and consistency of care. They are well supported by skilled trainers in behaviour management who also provide ongoing consultation. Young people have a clear understanding of their care plans and what is expected of them. Excellent practice is in place with no incidents of restraint and few sanctions being required. Rewards and positive reinforcement is realistic, effective and appropriate. Young people clearly value the support and care provided by staff. The home has highly effective constructive behaviour management strategies in place and staff review these with the young people to ensure they remain purposeful and meaningful.

Young people benefit tremendously from living in a small homely environment on a local residential estate. Staff provide an excellent range of opportunities for young

people to engage in all aspects of home and community life. This means they gain insight into safe working practices for day-to-day living and how to access resources and facilities to maintain a safe environment and make healthy lifestyle choices. Young people develop a broad range of personal and social skills in preparation for independent living. Young people are extremely well informed of the importance of keeping themselves safe through daily discussion and demonstration of health and safety strategies.

The home has an established and effective system for the vetting and supervision of visitors. The management have developed an extremely robust system for the recruitment of suitable staff to work with young people.

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.