

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC390156
Inspection date	30 September 2009
Inspector	Mark Blesky
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	30 June 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 is a 3 bedded children's home in a location just outside a small seaside town. This home is built on two storeys and in 2009 underwent a major refurbishment.

Summary

This is an unannounced key inspection. This is the first inspection following registration. This service is inadequate. This service is not providing satisfactory services for young people. Many key documents, records of the care provisions and procedures were not evidenced during this inspection. There was insufficient evidence presented at the inspection to demonstrate that this home was operating to a satisfactory standard.

The overall quality rating is inadequate.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

This is the first inspection since registration.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Menus are produced by the staff members following discussion with the young people. Young people state their likes and dislikes with the staff and these are taken into account in menu planning. Young people are encouraged to make healthy choices and choose food that is wholesome and nutritious. Young people say that they can express choice and there are always nice meals served in the home. Young people are asked by the staff to contribute to the menu planning. It was noted that menus were rather poorly presented and were in a bland spreadsheet format.

Although the meals detailed were adequate, these menus were uninspiring and provided little encouragement to promoting interest in healthy eating and menu planning.

Health care planning is supported by staff who maintain the health care files for all young people. It was noted that although routine and specific medical appointments are being attended, there was little evidence of the treatment or result of the intervention. The sampled file information did not contain adequate health history regarding general healthcare needs, records of developmental checks or immunisations. There was insufficient evidence in the home to demonstrate that the registered person is promoting and protecting the health of the children.

Medication is not appropriately controlled. Medication records are unclear, records of dosage are inaccurate, and the administration records inadequate. Medication storage is not robust and currently medication is kept in a wooden cupboard, rather than in a dedicated securely fitted cabinet.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

The young people spoken to say that staff respect their rights to privacy and allow them to have time alone. A telephone is available for the young people's private use and staff make

writing and posting material available. Staff knock on young people's doors before they enter and await invitation. There are no complaints procedures or complaint records present in the home.

Safeguarding procedures were not available for examination at the time of the inspection, although a copy of these procedures were later brought to the home. In the absence of this guidance it was considered that adequate procedures were not in place.

Documents relating to missing and absent person's could not be found in the home. It is however noted that there are several references to incidents of missing person's. It was also noted that missing person's documentation still identifies the regulatory body the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) that was disbanded in 2004. One missing person's record was later found, but this was un-dated.

No information addressing anti-bullying policy and procedures, and no records of incidents of bullying were found in the home. No records of sanctions could be found during the inspection.

It was noted however that there were references to behaviour and damage in the home that was clearly disruptive and unacceptable and this should have resulted in action being taken by the home's staff.

Risk assessments were unclear and vague providing little evidence to consider the risks or action to take to reduce assessed risk.

This home has recently been totally refurbished prior to opening as a children's home.

The house is very well maintained, with good quality furniture and fittings. The building has a homely atmosphere and is appropriate to the needs of the young people and the homes published statement of purpose.

A visitor's book is presented to each person entering the home and no visitor is allowed unsupervised access to the home or young people. Appropriate recruitment arrangements are made for employing staff and this includes a formal interview panel and vetting procedures. Staff files are maintained at the company's head office and contain appropriate information. It was noted that some files appeared a little sparse regarding employee information. The registered provider confirmed that these files are currently under review.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

No records of key working were found at the time of the inspection.

No records of education history or personal educational plan was found during the inspection. It was noted that a recent school report was the only document that was on file. Evidence was not presented during the inspection to demonstrate that the standards are being met to a satisfactory standard.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Care plans are maintained for all young people in the home. The placing authority's plans are used by the home to produce placement plans detailing the day to day needs of the young people. It was noted that although the placement plan was up to date and adequate, it was incorrectly dated.

Reviews are carried out by placing authorities in accordance with statutory guidelines. It was noted that a review report was present, but this had not included any contribution from the young person. In addition, although the review in one case had taken place over two months prior, there is no review plan available. No staff notes of the review were made during the staff attendance and therefore any recommendations made at this review could not be implemented in a timely fashion. No review documentation detailing the outcome of the review is in the home. There is no evidence present to suggest that the registered person is actively chasing these documents.

Young people are supported in maintaining contact with friends and family. Young people are provided with the transport or finances to maintain contact. The staff also provide emotional support to each young person prior to and post contact. Telephone contact is recorded and where contact is supervised, records are kept of this contact and are used to consider the progress.

Policies are published regarding planned and emergency placements. Young people are spoken to along with staff in any planned placement and arrangements are made to introduce any young person, new to the home, to the existing young people. It was noted that the current emergency placement policy does not include the need for review within 72 hours. Only one record of a children's meeting could be found and this did not provide evidence that young people's views and opinions were being appropriately ascertained or discussed.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is inadequate.

There is no evidence available in the home detailing independency planning or pathway planning. In the absence of this information, evidence was not presented to demonstrate that this standard is being met to a satisfactory standard.

Each young person is given pocket money and young people can earn more money through completing chores in the home. Young people are able to spend their money how they wish and they are able to choose their own toiletries and the more personal items. Bedrooms can be decorated to the young person's own wishes and young people are able and encouraged to make choices regarding their dress and expressions of their individuality.

The home design is appropriate for the young people accommodated and the home's statement of purpose. There is ample space and rooms and facilities have been planned and provided with appropriate insight. The home is decorated and furnished to a very high standard and presents as a well maintained and very pleasant family home.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The promotion of equality and diversity is inadequate. Individual planning, key working, support systems, and practices do not provide sufficient evidence of the promotion of equality and diversity.

The home has a very comprehensive statement of purpose and children's guide, which is regularly reviewed.

Supervision and training records are kept at the company's head office.

Supervision is being performed however, some examples lacked structure and planning.

Staff meetings are detailed and comprehensive. Areas are relevant and appropriately prioritised. Sufficient detail is provided by the records to identify the area of concern, but minutes of the meeting detail very little evidence of discussion or outcomes.

The provider maintains an on call system and oversees the out of hours and urgent calls. There are sufficient staff on duty in the home at all times to meet the needs of the young people.

Staff members are training to National Vocational Qualification in caring for children and young people level 3 or equivalent. The training of staff has not reached 80% in accordance with the national minimum standards. All staff receive mandatory training with refresher and more specific training also provided.

Training in core areas of care is ongoing and each staff member has their personal training evaluated appropriately with regards to their role and the needs of the young people.

Regulation 33 reports that consider the conduct of the home were unavailable for inspection.

Regulation 34 monitoring was not evidenced during the inspection. It was noted that there were no systems available to demonstrate that the home is being monitored regarding the matters set out in schedule 6 of the children's homes regulations 2001. However, it is acknowledged that this home has only been open for a short period of time and development of this process is being planned.

The manager is appropriately qualified to manage this home and has worked in a senior position prior to taking up this current post.

Young people's files are kept securely and information that is available is appropriately divided into relevant sections and legible. Administration of the home is adequate and the home appears financially sound.

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 Children's 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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12	ensure that children's health needs are met, including access to a GP, dental care and support to keep appointments. This should include adequate healthcare planning and recording (regulation 20)	31 December 2009
13	keep an accurate record of all medication, prescribed and non-prescribed and ensure all medication is kept in a secure place (Regulation 21)	31 December 2009
17	maintain an up to date copy of the Safeguarding procedures of the local authority in which the home is situated, which must include the up to date contact details for significant people in that procedure (Regulation 16)	31 December 2009
16	maintain a record of all complaints made by children and young people in the home and actions taken as a result (Regulation 24)	31 December 2009
18	maintain an effective anti-bullying procedure as part of the homes safeguarding practice. This procedure includes guidance for staff, records of incidents of bullying and actions to counter bullying (Regulation 16)	31 December 2009
22	maintain an accurate and up to date record of measures of control used, as set out in Regulation 17 (Regulation 17)	31 December 2009
26	ensure risk assessments are carried out and unnecessary risks to the health or safety of children accommodated in the home are identified and so far as possible eliminated (Regulation 23)	31 December 2009
14	promote the educational attainment of all children accommodated in the children's home and maintain close liaison with each child's placing authority with a view to obtaining appropriate educational arrangements for the child. Obtain a copy of the personal education plan for each child (Regulation 18)	31 December 2009
6	maintain plans for young people to prepare them for independence to contribute to the development of the Pathway Plan (Children Act 1989, Sections 22,61,64)	31 December 2009
32	undertake monthly visits as set out in Regulation 33 (Regulation 33)	31 December 2009
33	establish and maintain a system for monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6 at appropriate intervals and improving the quality of care provided in the children's home. (Regulation 34)	31 December 2009

Recommendations

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

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- ensure healthy eating and diet is promoted by menus presented to encourage young people's interest and education (National Minimum Standards 10)
 - ensure adequate arrangements and recording is maintained for young people that are missing or absent without authority (National Minimum Standards 19)
 - ensure that all staff have complete and up to date recruitment and employment records (National Minimum Standards 27)
 - ensure that each young person receives individual support through one to one and key working sessions (National Minimum Standards 7)
 - ensure care plans and placement plans are accurately maintained and reviews of these plans are effectively implemented (National Minimum Standards 2,3)
 - ensure guidance is maintained to ensure that all emergency placements are reviewed within 72 hours of placement (National Minimum Standards 5)
 - ensure house meetings and individual support is provided within key worker sessions and children's or house meetings (National Minimum Standards 8)
 - ensure supervision for all staff is planned and structured and addresses the elements detailed under National Minimum Standards (National Minimum Standards 28)
 - ensure staff meetings include discussion of both the home's work in caring for individual children and the management of the current child group, together with review of the home's practices (National Minimum Standards 28)
 - ensure that a minimum of 80% of the staff are qualified to National Vocational Qualification in caring for children and young people level three, or equivalent (National Minimum Standards 29)