

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	25 January 2010
Inspector	Mary Timms
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	20 August 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 provides respite support for families with children who have a learning difficulty. The premises have been updated to provide appropriate accommodation and adaptations to support the needs of children using the service. There are two adjacent lounge areas, a dining room, a kitchen which may be accessed by children with supervision, two bathrooms, appropriate office and storage space, a covered play area outside and garden areas. The home is situated in a residential area within easy travelling distance from a range of community resources.

Summary

This was an unannounced interim inspection. The visit was planned to review the progress the provider has made with a required action and with recommendations set on the previous full inspection undertaken in August 2009. The visit also reviews care arrangements against the staying safe outcome area.

The findings from this interim inspection are supported by the full inspection undertaken in August 2009. Judgements have been made under outcome areas: being healthy, staying safe, positive contribution, achieving economic wellbeing and organisation. There continues to be good management oversight of the respite services provided to children and families. Good arrangements are in place to support children to stay safe and to promote their general wellbeing.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The Registered Manager has taken action to improve the quality of individual placement plans. These are now appropriately detailed and clarify how the service will meet individual needs. However, plans produced in relation to supporting children to develop an appropriate level of independence continue to sometimes lack the necessary level of detail.

The Registered Manager has improved the food safety management system, which reduces the potential of risk to children.

The provision of intimate personal care and working with children with an autistic spectrum disorder is now included in training arrangements for all staff. Action has been taken to improve identified areas of record keeping

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Detailed individual health care plans are produced. Plans clarify an assessment of need, reflect details of involved health care professionals and set out detailed guidance for staff.

The service operates an effective food safety management system.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safeguarded by service arrangements.

Children are protected by robust staff recruitment procedures. All required checks are undertaken prior to staff commencing work in the home. Staff undertake safeguarding children training. The Registered Manager takes appropriate action in relation to arising safeguarding concerns.

Children are cared for in a safe environment. The security of the building prevents children from leaving without adult supervision. A fire safety risk assessment supports safeguarding arrangements. Fire evacuation drills are undertaken and alarms are tested on a weekly basis. Weekly and further monthly health and safety checks are undertaken. Issues of health and safety are monitored by the management team and also external managers who visit the home.

Families and children are able to raise a concern or complaint. The service has complaints policies and procedures, which are made known to families at the point of a placement agreement. Complaints leaflets are on display within the home, which use simple language and pictures to aid children's comprehension.

Children's privacy and dignity is respected within arrangements for the provision of intimate personal care.

Challenging behaviour is well managed. Behaviour management strategies are agreed with parents and are set out clearly within placement planning documents. The service consults with a community learning disability health professional in relation to the management of challenging behaviour. Staff undertake behaviour management training, including the use of physical intervention. Sanctions are rarely used and physical intervention is used only as a last resort.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's needs are supported by detailed placement plans. Plans reflect a thorough assessment of need and are produced in consultation with parents and social workers. Plans set out detailed guidance for care staff and provide details of personal care, health and educational support needs, behaviour management, personal interests and communication needs.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is satisfactory.

Placement plans identify areas of focus for the development of appropriate levels of independence. However, there is a lack of clarity as to how the service will support identified needs. This raises the potential for inconsistency or for needs to go unmet in this area.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The Registered Manager consulted widely with the staff team after the last inspection. The report was reviewed and the whole team debated how the service could be further improved. This shows a good level of consultation within service development.

The Registered Manager is supported by a suitably experienced deputy manager. There is a stable staff team who are knowledgeable and committed to providing a good service for children.

Training arrangements were identified as good on the full inspection, these now include improved arrangements to ensure that all staff have undertaken training in autistic spectrum disorders.

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 that there is a comprehensive plan for young people preparing for adulthood. In particular this relates to the need for plans to fully detail agreed areas of focus and to clarify how needs will be met in relation to the development of independence skills. (NMS 6.1 and 6.7)