

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Simon Morley
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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 up to three children or young people of either gender, between the ages of eight and 17 years old, who have a learning disability.

There is a range of local community facilities nearby and easy access to local transport. There is some car parking for visitors. The home has a driveway, on-street parking is for permit holders and there are some pay-and-display spaces nearby.

The home is detached, with front and rear gardens, situated in a residential area of a large city. Downstairs there is a hallway, kitchen, dining room, lounge and play room. Upstairs are three bedrooms, a bathroom and office accommodation. The home has been fitted with minor aids and adaptations to help support children and young people with physical disabilities.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection to check the both the quality of safeguarding arrangements and compliance with the required improvements from the last inspection.

Children and young people's safety and welfare is promoted well and there are good arrangements to keep them free from harm. There is a better approach to risk management that promotes children and young people's rights and independence in a safe way. Children and young people are free from bullying and there are good levels of support to help them develop.

There was evidence that all the required improvements except one from the last inspection have been implemented. Though the safeguarding arrangements have improved the overall quality rating remains satisfactory pending a full inspection of all outcome areas.

As a result of this inspection the registered provider is required to make sure there is an up-to-date development plan for the home and that risk assessments are accurate in their description of risks to children and young people.

Improvements since the last inspection

A children's guide for the home has been produced since the last inspection. This is available for children and young people to help them understand what the home

provides. There is a better approach to risk management so that excessive use of control measures has stopped and there is more appropriate use of sanctions in relation to children and young people's needs and backgrounds.

Improvements have been made to the physical environment so that there are appropriate floor coverings in children and young people's bedrooms and they are able to open their windows for ventilation.

Though a self assessment of the quality of the service was completed shortly after the last inspection there was no up-to-date written development plan available for the home. Reports of the registered provider's assessment of the home are now being sent to Ofsted on a regular basis for monitoring.

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.

Children and young people benefit from the good quality of care they receive from dedicated and committed staff who keep them free from harm and promote their welfare.

Staff have safeguarding training and there is effective, regular communication with other agencies, for example, social workers, schools, and specialist health professionals. This helps ensure there is an integrated multi-agency approach to safeguarding children and young people. Any concerns about children and young people are communicated well with professionals involved in the multi-agency care that is provided. This is enhanced by a commitment to involving parents in the care of the children and young people and good support with family contact.

Staff have a good understanding of children and young people's needs, how they communicate, helping them take part in and enjoy a range of meaningful activities. Staff provide care professionally and with a good degree of empathy and sensitivity. This helps children and young people enjoy their time, feel safe, facilitates their development and reduces the likelihood of challenging behaviour. Staff also work hard to ensure there are consistent, firm but fair boundaries which communicate expectations of acceptable behaviour to children and young people. Good staffing levels enables close supervision of children and young people with prompt intervention if necessary should any incidents occur. This helps keep children and young people free from bullying and protects them from going missing.

The good outcomes children and young people experience with their development is based on staff clearly understanding their individual needs and their diversity and

caring for them accordingly. This helps avoid the use of institutional interventions such as sanctions and physical intervention which are both used very rarely in the home to manage behaviour. This has improved since the last inspection when there was some institutional practice. Staff are trained in and will, if necessary but only as a last resort, use physical intervention to protect the safety of children and young people. Since the last inspection the approach to managing risks and supporting children and young people with their development has improved, is more person-centred and takes better account of individual needs and abilities.

Record keeping is of good quality, in particular risk assessments and placement plans detailing the support children and young people require are well kept. This helps ensure staff have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the children and young people, their individual needs and how best to care for them and promote their welfare. Though such records are regularly reviewed one minor discrepancy was noted in relation to assessed risk and a young person's ability. This shortfall was not judged to have impacted on the positive outcomes for children and young people.

Children and young people benefit from having their dignity and privacy respected. There is a complaints process and evidence that effective action is taken to resolve children's, young people's and their families' concerns as they arise. Children and young people have regular contact with their families and other professionals with whom they can also raise any concerns.

The home is well maintained and provides good physical safety and security for the children and young people living there. Staff have a good understanding of their duties and carry these out well to ensure a safe and secure environment. There are suitable procedures for the recruitment of staff including making necessary background checks so that only staff who are safe and suitable get to work in 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 written risk assessments accurately reflect risks to children and young people so that appropriate measures are in place to reduce risks as far as possible (NMS 26.2)
- ensure there is a written development plan reviewed annually for the future of the home identifying any planned changes on the operation or resources of the home. (NMS 33.5)