

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspection date	07/12/2010
Inspector	Maire Atherton
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	18/01/2010
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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

This home is operated and managed by a national organisation and provides accommodation for young people who attend an associated residential special school.

The home provides care and accommodation for up to five young people aged nine to sixteen years who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is located in a rural area but close to community services.

A commitment to a therapeutic approach underpins the philosophy of care within a homely environment.

The home promotes social inclusion and aims to provide each young person the opportunity to develop their maximum potential through the delivery of an extended curriculum that is based on education and care.

Young people are afforded single bedrooms with proportionate communal space which includes a large kitchen/diner and two other reception areas. One of the young people's rooms has the facilities of a self-contained bed-sit which can be used to support preparation for independent living. The spacious garden is mainly laid to lawn with seating areas.

There were four young people in at the time of the visit and all participated in the inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This unannounced inspection followed up on the requirements made in the last report. In addition key standards were inspected under the outcome staying safe and a selection of standards were inspected from economic well-being and organisation.

Young people receive good care from a well led staff team who are skilled in developing and maintaining positive relationships. These enable the successful implementation of the behaviour management strategies that are in place.

Three areas are identified for improvement, two relate to records and the third to maintenance issues in the home.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were two actions arising from the last inspection and both have been addressed. The Statement of Purpose includes all the details required and a suitable ambient temperature in a bedroom has been achieved.

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.

Young people say that staff respect their privacy by knocking on their bedroom doors and waiting for an answer before they come in. They also say that staff do go into their bedrooms when they are not there, but this is generally to do with laundry or tidying up, which they like because they feel cared for. There are policies on privacy and room searches in place and staff are familiar with these.

Young people are confident that staff take their concerns seriously and address these as they arise. Staff support young people in making written complaints and young people confirm that they are happy with the way the complaints are managed and the outcome. Staff have some tolerance of play fighting between young people, recognising it as part of normal behaviour patterns, though this is not in accordance with the school policy in place in the home. Close and effective supervision by staff minimises opportunities for bullying to occur and ensures that any bullying behaviour is challenged promptly. This supports the victim, gives a clear message that bullying is not tolerated and helps the bully to understand the impact of the behaviour, both on himself and the victim. The success of this is seen in the improved relationships between the young people. Good supervision by staff also minimises the opportunities for unauthorised absence and there have been no such instances.

Staff are knowledgeable about the safeguarding procedures in place and how to implement these so as to protect young people. The manager is scheduled to attend external management level child protection training provided by the local authority in the new year.

The positive relationships that exist between the staff and young people provide a strong platform for the basis of behaviour management in the home. Rewards and incentives are key components of the behaviour management strategies and plans in place. Young people know the rules of the home and the consequences for breaking the rules, which they say are fairly and consistently applied. Staff are skilled in identifying potential triggers for young people and effectively divert young people from negative behaviour. Staff also use the positive physical intervention techniques they are trained in. The use of these measures is not frequent but they are not

subject to an up to date risk assessment in each case.

Health and safety in the home is generally well managed, please see the economic well-being section for further detail. There are clear systems in place for assessing environmental and individual risks. The range of service records and checks required are up to date, including fire drills.

Recruitment records were not available at the time of this visit but were evaluated as good at the time of the last inspection. Visitors sign in and are appropriately supervised.

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 satisfactory.

The home provides young people with comfortable, spacious accommodation that lends well to communal living. Young people personalise their single bedrooms with posters and other individual touches.

The house is let to the provider on a long lease. The flooring in the large kitchen/diner is lifting in places and is showing signs of wear; a significant number of the down lighters in the same room are not working and one of the two heating systems in the house is not working. Additional external lighting has not been installed as recommended in a fire service report and other external maintenance issues have been highlighted. There is a lack of clarity about which areas of maintenance are the responsibility of the provider and which are the responsibility of the landlord.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The Statement of Purpose has been reviewed and updated since the last inspection. Staff are well supported and are confident in the skill and knowledge of the manager. Staff are deployed effectively so as to provide good supervision levels, as well as opportunities for one-to-one activities with young people.

There is good evidence of in-house management monitoring of records, with observations used to inform practice in the home. There is no admission and discharge register in place.

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/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Std.	Action	Due date
22	ensure the safety of young people and staff, in particular by risk assessing the positive physical intervention techniques that may be used with each young person (Children's Homes Regulations 2001 23(c))	31/01/2011
24	clarify which areas of maintenance are the responsibility of the provider and which are the responsibility of the landlord and subsequently ensure compliance with Children's Homes Regulations 2001 31(2)	31/01/2011
34	establish an admission and discharge register. (Children's Homes Regulations 2001 29(1) Schedule 4 (1))	31/01/2011

Recommendations

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

- achieve consistency between the policy and practice relating to play fighting. (NMS 22)