

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Robert Curr
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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 setting provides up to five medium to long-term placements for young people aged between 11 and 17 years. The accommodation consists of seven single bedrooms and spacious communal areas for eating, studying and relaxing. The home is in a residential area, approximately two miles from the town centre and is close to public transport. One of the main aims of the setting is to provide a specialist and integrated response to the care and educational needs of young people.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection. Matters looked at during this visit relate to the outcome area of staying safe and recommendations made at the last inspection. Details of the previous recommendations are outlined in the improvement section of this report.

The outcome area of staying safe is well met and staff have a very clear understanding about keeping young people safe from harm. Young people's privacy and confidentiality is respected by staff. Good systems exist for young people to be supported to raise any issue or concern they may have about their support in the setting.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the registered person was asked to take action in relation to aspects of staying safe, enjoying and achieving, economic well being and organisation. This included planning for independence, practices around searching young people's bedrooms, staff training and the monitoring of the service.

If it is necessary to search through young people's possessions in an attempt to eliminate risks to health, the policy and guidance for staff and young people is clear.

When appropriate, young people have access to an advocate outside of the home to whom they can voice any concerns.

Where appropriate, young people are helped and supported in preparation for adulthood. Through the use of community action plans, they are given help and support with social skills, laundry, cooking skills, budgeting, clothing care and shopping.

Although very good progress has been made in relation to staff training in a number

areas, National Vocational Qualification ratios do not meet current standards.

The management undertake monthly internal monitoring as part of the quality assurance system for the home and reports give a clear picture of the quality of care offered in the home. These reports are published and shared with the staff team.

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.

Staff respect young people's right to privacy and confidentiality. Young people have their own bedrooms with lockable doors that can be overridden in case of an emergency; furthermore staff gain permission before entering. All documentation is securely stored and young people have access to a private telephone. This affords value and dignity to young people. There is a policy in place for undertaking room searches pertaining to the individual needs of young people.

There is an accessible complaints procedure and written records available for complaints received; however there have been no complaints since the last inspection. Staff are proactive in promoting young people's right to complain and young people fully understand how to raise any dissatisfaction. Young people know how to access children's rights officers and advocates if necessary. Staff view complaints positively, which encourages young people to express their views.

There is a policy in respect of anti-bullying that is reinforced throughout the activities within the home to ensure that young people feel safe and secure. There is an established and experienced core staff team that allows for close relationships with young people, this provides the opportunity for staff to act promptly if any incidents do occur, minimising the potential for bullying. Staff and young people undertake direct work together if it is considered that there is an incident of bullying in the home.

Safeguarding procedures are in place and provide clear guidance on how a member of staff should respond to any concerns or disclosures of abuse. All staff receive safeguarding training and records show that they have a good knowledge on how to put this in to practice. Staff work together with other agencies to promote the protection and welfare of young people.

If young people are absent from the home without permission, trained staff follow the home's procedure, which is in line with the local police protocol. There are no current issues with the resident young people and staff are fully aware of who to notify in respect of any significant event.

Staff receive guidance and training in positive behaviour management strategies and all recordings of sanctions are regularly reviewed and include the opportunity for young people to record their views. Placement plans, risk assessments and incident reports correlate to provide a robust mechanism for responding to young people's changing needs for safety and protection. Young people are supported to develop positive behaviour through the fostering of relationships with staff and the emphasis upon reward and praise. These practices encourage stability for young people and minimise the potential for placement disruption.

The home has systems in place to ensure all necessary health and safety and fire checks are carried out regularly. Fire drills are conducted by staff with young people. These steps ensure young people, staff and visitors are safe from risk from fire. Written risk assessments for the environment and young people are up to date and show strategies for staff to follow.

Recruitment and vetting procedures are in place that help safeguard young people from potential risks of unsafe persons. There is a rigorous recruitment process. Criminal Records Bureau and reference checks are all undertaken before any appointment of staff is made. Staff are subject to an induction process and probationary period of work to ensure the fitness of the individual in providing care to young people. Records of visitors are maintained and identification is requested where appropriate to ensure the safety of 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.

