

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	16 June 2010
Inspector	Dawn Taylor
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	16 December 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 children's home is registered to accommodate one young person, male or female, with an age range from 10 to 17 years of age.

It is rurally situated in a village. The detached house is set back from a main road and has been upgraded and refurbished for its current purpose. The home is set in its own enclosed garden.

The home is intended to provide a high degree of personalised care for one young person. It operates a permanent one-to-one staffing ratio.

Summary

This inspection was a key, unannounced inspection visit. The outcome groups relating to being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution, economic well-being and organisation were assessed.

The young person was present during the inspection process but chose not to participate.

The overall outcome judgement is outstanding. Being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution, economic well-being and organisation were all judged to be outstanding.

This company has established policies and procedures, which are underpinned by a comprehensive framework of staff training. This ensures high quality practice, which is sustained and results in robust and outstanding outcomes for young people. This home supports young people who demonstrate behaviour that at time puts them at high risk. The service has worked imaginatively and flexibly to ensure continuing continuity of practice and support for young people established within the company. The acting manager and new staff team also demonstrate insight and patience at supporting new young people to move in and feel at home.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The Registered Manager was asked to ensure actions taken in response to any allegation of abuse were clearly recorded. The recording system has been reviewed and is now regularly monitored by the acting manager and the regulation 33 visitor.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Outstanding health care and healthy lifestyles are effectively promoted by the company and the home's professional staff team. From the home's admission procedure through to day to day practice, young people are encouraged to develop a holistic overview of their lifestyle and the impact risky behaviours may have on their long-term health.

This outstanding practice is further enhanced by the company's therapy team who undertake direct work with young people and also attend all house meetings to facilitate discussions with the staff team. The company also has established links with a local authority health care agency,

which provides guidance and training to staff and young people, as well as direct confidential support to all young people with regard to relationships, sexuality and sexual health.

Young people partake in healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs. When new young people arrive at the home staff take time to get to know their likes and dislikes. They ensure they feel at home and comfortable by preparing familiar meals but they also slowly encourage them to try new food and become more involved in food preparation, focusing on healthy food.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The company and the staff team are skilled at working with young people who at times present high risk behaviours. Training for staff throughout the organisation is comprehensive and inclusive, ensuring all care, education, therapy and outdoor activity staff mirror consistent values and ethos in their practice.

Staff are realistic that outstanding outcomes will not be immediate for some young people but ensure, through the provision of a safe and secure living environment, that young people are afforded the opportunity to build or rebuild confidence in their coping and problem solving skills. This service understands that a vital component of keeping a young person safe is to recognise what level of risk they present to themselves and others. This determines the level of supervision required and the strategies needed to support each individual young person to develop. A crucial element of this process is the life space interview, which helps the young person to gain insight and understanding into the reasons why they react in the way they do and help them build strategies to cope.

All staff have robust training that includes safeguarding. In addition, all Registered Managers have achieved their local authority's level 2 safeguarding training. This year the company are focusing on all seniors achieving their local authority's level 2 safeguarding training. There are two Registered Managers within the company who have qualified with Shropshire Local Authority to deliver this training and the company are working in partnership with the local authority to deliver safeguarding training to all Shropshire childcare services.

Young people's safety is promoted by an established health and safety policy, which ensures risks are identified and appropriate action is taken to manage and reduce them. Young people and staff are involved in fire drills and there are regular checks on all fire and electrical equipment to ensure it is in good working order. All staff are appropriately trained in health and safety matters including first aid and fire awareness.

Records relating to staff recruitment and selection were checked at the company's headquarters in June 2010. The company's recruitment and selection process is robust and the procedure includes checks over and above those required in the Children Homes Regulations. The staff appointed to work at this home are all experienced and have been working within the company for sometime.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Support to individual young people is flexible and imaginative. It focuses on their specific needs through placement plans, key worker sessions and daily programmes tailored to meet their needs. Staff recognise the importance of developing a positive and respectful relationship with young people. For example, a key worker is not just appointed, young people are encouraged to meet the whole staff team and then choose a key worker.

Educational opportunities are outstanding and take into account each young person's current needs, as well as their potential. Young people receive excellent support and encouragement with their educational attainment. The company operates its own registered school, as well as an outdoor education department. The service will also support young people to attend mainstream schools or colleges or those who are employed. Where appropriate the home's staff will support young people in their educational establishment. There is outstanding dialogue between the home and the company's school, The Evolution Centre. The staff team are in daily communication with education staff. The school is proactive in engaging young people who have been out of education for a long time or who have struggled to engage with education. Visiting the school is an integral part of moving into the home and the young person, social worker and family, where appropriate, are all encouraged to visit.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Staff and the acting manager demonstrate a professional and sensitive insight into the needs of the young people for whom they provide a service. Each young person has a comprehensive placement plan that identifies the aims and objectives of their placement. These plans are reviewed regularly with the involvement of the young people. Staff monitor the progress young people are making and produce monthly reports that are shared with the young peoples families, where appropriate, and other professionals.

The contribution young people make to the operation of the home and their own future plans is excellent. Staff continue to use a range of ways to consult with young people in the home. Young people have the opportunity to express their views and opinions through individual sessions with their key worker and day to day discussions with the acting manager and staff team. The home is proactive in ensuring that all young people are aware that they can speak to independent agencies and professionals outside of the home. Staff demonstrate a clear commitment to promoting consultation and involve young people in the running of the home.

The promotion of constructive contact with family and friends is outstanding. The company are committed to supporting contact with family and significant others and believe it to be of vital importance that the family remain central to the young persons life. Staff are creative and flexible when supporting transport, organising contact visits and promoting positive relationships.

The established procedures and practice for supporting young people to move into and leave the home are outstanding. These provide staff with clear guidance and practical options that ensure the most appropriate and sensitive approach can be implemented for each individual young person depending upon their circumstance. Prior to arriving at a home detailed information is gathered from the placing authority and previous placements. Comprehensive impact risk assessment are completed and all this information is used by staff to establish initial strong boundaries that ensure young people feel and are kept safe. These are regularly reviewed and modified through the constant review of young people's progress in relation to their placement plans.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

Young people receive outstanding support to develop the skills they will require when they eventually leave the home or leave care. Staff are able to tailor support depending upon the interest, age and abilities of the young people. They are also very proactive at adjusting and being creative with their practice to ensure opportunities are made available to young people to ensure their need to develop life skills can be achieved. Young people are not put on programmes to learn independence skills, instead it is the ethos of the home to involve and nurture them towards gaining the skills alongside strong staff role models.

The home is furnished and equipped to a high standard and feels welcoming and homely. The home's location, design and size are in keeping with its purpose and function. The home provides ample space for communal and individual activity, for young people to be creative and for relaxation. The staff are proactive in repairing any damage, involving the young people in the development of the home when they first move in and then in the maintenance of the home to ensure the high standard is maintained.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Young people benefit from a well-managed service that is having a positive impact on the quality of their care and education. The setting has an up-to-date Statement of Purpose and young person's guide that fully identify what support and help can be expected from the service. The information is comprehensive and effectively communicated. Staff are aware of the key principles and philosophy of the service and share this clear vision.

The company promotes continuity of care and stable meaningful relationships between staff and young people. For example, the home's previous staff team have recently moved internally with the young person to a new home. The home's current staff team have been chosen to meet the needs of the next young person moving into the home. The company have also been proactive in ensuring there is appropriate handover time between the existing Registered Manager, who is going on maternity leave, and the current acting manager. This has also been timed with the new young person moving into the home. The application for the acting manager to be registered with Ofsted has been submitted.

The standard of care is outstanding and promotes positive relationships between adults and young people. The staff team receive excellent support and guidance through a clear management structure. They promote a happy and caring atmosphere in a professional and motivating environment. They are committed to providing an exceptional level of support and guidance to young people. The staff are excellent role models, demonstrating courtesy to young people, parents and visitors to the home, and this contributes to the home's positive ethos.

Young people are looked after by staff who are themselves proactively supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting young peoples' welfare and meeting their individual needs. All staff receive a comprehensive induction, regular supervision and annual appraisals. All staff are provided with comprehensive policies, procedures and guidance that promotes the strong values and ethos of the service. Staff continue to receive a comprehensive range of in-house training to ensure their childcare practice remains up-to-date. This is a key strength of the

setting and as a result, staff are suitably trained to support the diverse needs of young people with complex needs.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. There are comprehensive policies and procedural guidance for staff on anti-bullying, anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice and equal opportunities.

This service has substantial strengths and where areas for improvement emerge the acting manager recognises and manages them well. There are very clear lines of management and communication. Regulation 33 and regulation 34 visits are well established and valued by staff and management. This internal monitoring and regulation ensures praise and acknowledgement of good practice but also addresses shortfalls with an appropriate measure of rigor.

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

There are no recommendations.