

Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC397112        |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 2 February 2010 |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Julia Toller    |
| <b>Type of Inspection</b>      | Key             |

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|--------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 30 July 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 is a large detached house with grounds to the front and rear of the property. Downstairs there are three reception rooms, hallway and large kitchen/dining area. To the first floor there are two bedrooms for young people and bathroom with bath and shower facilities. There is also a staff bedroom with separate en-suite facilities. The second floor has a further two bedrooms for use by young people. Outside there is a large secure back garden. Although situated in a quiet area, the property is located close to town centres and within easy reach of transport networks, leisure facilities and schools for young people.

### **Summary**

At this unannounced full inspection, all key standards were inspected. This is an inadequate service overall.

Systems are not in place to ensure that young people are adequately safeguarded through recruitment and risk assessment procedures. Medication policies and procedures are not being followed to ensure that the health needs of young people are met safely.

Young people benefit from positive relationships with staff, they are encouraged to follow a healthy lifestyle, to develop their life skills and to reach good outcomes from education.

Staff have not received regular supervision, they do, however, work well with other professionals to try and meet the holistic needs of young people in areas such as emotional and physical wellbeing.

The overall quality rating is inadequate.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

As this was home was registered in July 2009 and this was the first inspection of the service, there were no actions or recommendations to monitor at this inspection.

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people have a health care plan that identifies some of their individual health needs and how these are to be met in areas such as, physical health and emotional wellbeing. These are not always updated to ensure that they are an accurate reflection of young people's needs.

Staff are trained in the safe administration of medicines. However, systems and practice around the storage and administration of medication are not sufficiently robust to ensure that the health care needs of young people are met. This does not ensure that the health care needs of young people are met safely.

Meal times are sociable planned occasions. Menus are planned with young people being offered advice and guidance on how to follow a healthy lifestyle and eat a balanced nutritious diet.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is inadequate.

Staff respect young people's privacy and confidentiality in a way that is consistent with good parenting and the need to protect young people. However, procedures for when staff need to search young people's rooms are inadequate, and do not promote the privacy of young people.

Young people can make and receive telephone calls in private and are given space and time to be alone when they wish. There is a system for the recording of complaints at the home, however, no complaints have as yet been made.

Staff fully understand about their roles and responsibilities to promote and safeguard young people's welfare. They receive training in how to safeguard young people including recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse. They provide a good level of supervision for young people based on their age to make sure they are safe in the home and in the community. They give young people good advice about personal safety. Staff respond appropriately to any serious concerns about young people's safety and let parents, the police and social workers know about serious events involving young people. However, the service has not always notified Ofsted of incidents in line with schedule 5.

Bullying is not tolerated at the home, but where staff are concerned that it is happening, appropriate action is taken by staff, and the situation monitored to ensure that young people are kept safe.

Staff reassure young people when they are upset and help them deal with their anxieties and frustrations in a positive way. Staff do not condone unacceptable behaviour and assist young people to learn to manage their behaviour and solve problems. However regular financial sanctions and systems for the repayment of 'fines' and use of young people's personal finances to repay fines is inappropriate. This does not encourage young people to work towards incentive schemes or use monies, such as clothing money for the purpose it is intended.

Although young people have individual risk assessments and care plans that outline the steps needed to keep them safe and minimise risks to their individual welfare, they do not address all risks pertinent to young people and staff are not acting on the procedures highlighted in the assessment. Risk assessments are also not updated regularly to ensure that they reflect the ongoing current care needs and risks associated with young people.

There is a fire safety risk assessment at the home, but the safety of young people and staff is not promoted by the regular testing of fire safety equipment or regular fire drills. Systems are not, therefore, being used adequately to monitor that the home is a safe place for young people to live in.

Recruitment procedures are not robust enough. Whilst staff files are maintained in line with schedule 2 of the Children's Homes Regulations 1991, issues raised on CRB disclosures and 'gaps' in employment are not adequately investigated to fully safeguard young people.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people sometimes receive individual support in accordance with their needs, direct work sessions are minimal and recording of these sessions is spasmodic. This means that young people do not always receive the level of support they need to meet their care needs.

Staff promote the importance of education with young people and ensure they are prepared for their attendance. Where necessary, staff attend meetings with schools to promote attendance. This demonstrates an acknowledgement of the importance of education.

There is some evidence of young people taking part in activities with staff. Although this is not happening very often at the moment, staff continue to offer young people opportunities to experience a variety of leisure activities.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Each young person has a placement plan that sets out some of their individual needs. However, as they are not updated frequently, they do not always demonstrate the knowledge that staff have about the health care needs of young people and lack detail about individual care needs.

Young people have their care reviewed, for which staff produce a summary report for the placing authority. This provides an evaluation of young people's care, welfare and health. In addition, placing authorities and families are kept informed of the progress made by young people or of any issues affecting their care.

Records do not reflect that young people are consulted about their care or the running of the home, this does not ensure that systems allow for young people to be listened to and their wishes acted upon.

The home actively promotes positive contact in accordance with known safeguards. There is recognition by staff of the importance families play in a young person's life. In some instances, risk assessments detail actions for staff to follow where young people have initiated inappropriate contact. This assists in safeguarding young people.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is inadequate.

Staff prepare young people for adult life, they are encouraged to take more responsibility for themselves, suitable to their age and understanding. They routinely learn skills, such as shopping, cooking, using money and household tasks. They are also encouraged to develop their personal care, organisational and social skills.

The home has been damaged, and is showing some signs of wear and tear, with some issues still outstanding. This shows that the home has not identified the shortfalls or taken appropriate action to address them. Some young people have personalised their bedrooms and all young people have enough personal space to meet their needs.

Doors are locked. Some individual bedrooms are personalised and well furnished; others are not. Shortfalls include lack of appropriate bedding, damage to walls, broken bedroom furniture, and a broken restrictor to a bedroom window. This does not provide young people with safe, homely comfortable accommodation in which to live.

## Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The promotion of equality and diversity is inadequate. Whilst there is some evidence to demonstrate that the individual care needs of young people are identified, direct work with young people is minimal and their care needs are not routinely monitored. This does not ensure that the individual care needs of young people are met.

The home's Statement of Purpose and Children's Guide are currently under review to reflect the changes to the manager and responsible individual. They set out and describe the type of service provided. This means that young people their parents and social workers are provided with appropriate information about the home and organisation.

Staff are appropriately trained within their roles. However, risk assessments are not in place to show how staffing levels at the home are adequate to safeguard and meet the needs of young people.

Staff are not receiving regular supervision, this does not provide them with an opportunity to discuss their personal development or any issues they may have with their supervisor. However, staff team meetings have now begun again after some time, which does allow some opportunity for staff to discuss any issues they may have.

The service has not had a Responsible Individual for some months, and the home has not therefore been monitored in line with Regulation 33. In a similar fashion, the position of manager has also been vacant and the internal systems at the home have not been monitored to identify shortfalls, for example, updating risk assessments and health care plans. This has not fully safeguarded or promoted the welfare of young people living at the home.

## 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         |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 13       | ensure that there are suitable arrangements for the recording, handling, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of any medication received into the children's home (Reg 21)                                                                 | 25 February 2010 |
| 9        | ensure that the home is conducted in a manner which respects the privacy and dignity of children accommodated at the home, in particular procedures for room searches (Reg 11)                                                                      | 25 February 2010 |
| 26       | ensure that any unnecessary risks to the health or safety of children accommodated in the home are identified and so far as possible eliminated in particular, full details of all risks apparent to young people including regular updates of risk | 25 February 2010 |

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|    | assessments and risk assessments where bullying is taking place at the home (Reg 23)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                  |
| 20 | ensure that Ofsted are notified of all issues as identified under schedule 5 of the Children's Homes Regulations (Reg 30)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 11 February 2010 |
| 22 | ensure that sanctions made of young people are not excessive and that the imposition of any financial penalty is of a reasonable sum repaid in instalments or by way of reparation (Reg 17)                                                                                                                                                                                   | 18 February 2010 |
| 26 | ensure that there are adequate precautions against the risk of fire including the provision of suitable fire equipment, and by means of fire drills at suitable intervals make children and staff aware of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire and make arrangements for persons working at the home to receive suitable training in fire prevention (Reg 32) | 18 February 2010 |
| 27 | ensure that persons employed are 'fit' to work at the home (Reg 26)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 18 February 2010 |
| 30 | ensure that there are sufficient suitable qualified staff to meet the needs of young people and that risk assessments indicate where it is suitable to work on a one to one ratio (Reg 25)                                                                                                                                                                                    | 25 February 2010 |
| 24 | ensure that all parts of the children's home are suitably furnished and equipped, of sound construction and kept in good structural repair externally and internally (Reg 31)                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 18 February 2010 |
| 26 | ensure that all parts of the home to which children have access are so far as reasonably practicable free from hazards to their safety, for example, window restrictors are fitted to upstairs windows (Reg 23)                                                                                                                                                               | 18 February 2010 |
| 22 | ensure that within 24 hours any measure of control or restraint is recorded in particular when doors are locked at the home (Reg 17)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 18 February 2010 |
| 28 | ensure that all persons employed shall receive appropriate supervision and appraisal. (Reg 27)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 25 February 2010 |

## Recommendations

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

- ensure that staff record outcomes of direct work sessions and significant conversations with young people to show how the individual care needs of young people are met (NMS 7)
- ensure that health care plans hold full details of young people's needs and that they are updated regularly to ensure that staff are aware of the current health needs of young people (NMS 12)

- ensure that systems are in place for consulting with young people about their care and the running of the home. (NMS 8)