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Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC398391
Inspection date	19/01/2011
Inspector	Andrew Hewston
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	10/08/2010

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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 is a small children's home offering care and accommodation to three young people aged between nine and 17 years of age.

The purpose of the home is to offer placements to young people with a range of presenting difficulties and in need of specialist residential services. The home is situated in a rural area with nearby woods.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

This was an unannounced random inspection and was completed to examine the actions and recommendations made at the last inspection, as well as examining the staying safe outcome. Two young people were present and both were spoken to during the inspection. The inspection was completed two months after the whole of the staff team and young people changed premises with another home from the organisation. At the time of the inspection the home was in the process of being redecorated.

Some good care practices were noted as part of the inspection, but there are a range of recording concerns that need to be rectified to ensure the safety of young people within the home.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous inspection highlighted three actions and one recommendation to ensure that the care provided is in line with the national minimum standards. All of the actions have been met, but there is insufficient evidence to show that appraisals have been completed with all of the staff and this recommendation will continue towards the next inspection. All young people have full placement plans and health plans that are in line with the expectations of the standards and ensure that staff are aware of how their specific needs are to be met. Medication administration records are completed appropriately and ensure the safety of young people in this area.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Privacy arrangements are appropriate within the home. Young people have sufficient access to bathrooms and their own rooms. Staff are aware of young people's privacy and ensure that they knock on bedroom doors prior to entering. Young people are able to use the home's telephone in private.

The home's complaints log shows that two complaints have been made and responded to prior to the move of staff and young people. There have been no complaints since the move. Stamped addressed envelopes and complaints forms are freely available within the home so that young people can write to complain to either Ofsted or the home's operational manager, however, there is a lack of any information regarding how young people can contact Ofsted by phone. Young people state that there are no issues relating to bullying within the home and staff are aware of how to respond to such behaviours.

Safeguarding concerns raised by the care staff team are forwarded to young people's placing social workers. There is a lack of clarity regarding when concerns are raised directly to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Staff are not sufficiently clear as to who the home's (LSCB) is, or how to contact them. This is due in part to the recent redecoration of the office area and removal of some key information which is not able to be found.

Recording systems are in place to respond to young people that absent themselves without permission. Individual records are in place and fully recorded. There is also a log book that is used in the home to reference incidents of absence although this does not contain all instances of this behaviour.

Behaviour management systems are in place within the home and staff promote positive behaviours through rewards. All staff have completed training in the use of restraint and levels of restraint are low within the home. Not all of the recordings of restraints are sufficiently clear as to why they have been used and whether these are necessary to ensure the safety of the young people. Measures of control including sanctions are recorded within individualised records, with a complementary reference book in the home. Not all of the measures of control are referenced within the home's log book. An insufficient number of sanctions have been signed off as being monitored by the Registered Manager.

There are a range of systems in place to support the safety of the young people and staff. Fire checks are completed on a regular basis, although there is a lack of evidence of sufficient drills being completed at the home since the last inspection. Portable appliance testing and the gas landlords certificates are up to date. There is insufficient information regarding the date of the last electrical installation check. Risk assessments relating to the home and young people are completed and show that staff have a good awareness about the differing risks relating to activities and specific behaviours that they may display. Risk assessments are also in place for the home.

Staff recruitment checks were completed as part of the key inspection and were found to be appropriate.

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?

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
17	ensure the prompt referral to the local authority in whose area the children's home is situated, of any allegation of abuse or neglect affecting any child accommodated in the children's home (Regulation 16.2)	04/02/2011
22	ensure all recordings of restraints are fully completed in line with legislation and the national minimum standards. (Regulation 17.4)	04/02/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure all staff have an annual appraisal carried out (NMS 28.7)
- ensure there if information available regarding how to contact Ofsted (NMS 16.5)
- ensure information regarding the Local Safeguarding Children Board is available and staff are clear about how to make direct referrals (NMS 17.2)
- ensure the registered person regularly monitors behaviour management records (NMS 22.11)
- ensure that evidence of previous fire drills are available for inspection (NMS 26.8)
- ensure certification of the inspection of the electrical installation is available for inspection. (NMS 26.4)