

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC398391
Inspection date	25 January 2010
Inspector	Andrew Hewston
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	21 July 2009
--------------------------------	--------------

© Crown copyright 2010

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Cripins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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 small children's home offering care and accommodation to 3 young people.

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 within pleasant surroundings and a nearby wood.

Summary

This was an unannounced key inspection to the home. The inspection highlights that staff are committed to providing a good level of care to the young people although some of the care planning to evidence this is in need of development. Health promotion is positive although medication administration requires some evaluation.

Young people are kept safe through good systems. The local safeguarding board's agreement to allow a level of self investigation shows an amount of trust invested into the home, although, this relationship needs clarification in a more formal way.

Young people are well supported in a range of ways within the home. This is notable through the way that educationally young people have thorough back up from the staff team and in the home activities form a positive part of young people's lives.

The staff team are well supported by the management and there are effective recording systems within the home to support young people in a range of ways. Staff are appropriately trained and there is effective and positive leadership from the manager.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

This is a new registration following the administration of the old organisation. No concerns have been raised with regard to the continuity of care to the young people as part of this change. No previous actions or recommendations of good practice are in place with regard to this registered provision.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young people are well fed within the home and experience a good range of meals. Menus are developed through discussions with the young people at their weekly meetings. Mealtimes are pleasant sociable occasions where staff regularly eat with young people.

Health planning within placement plans is basic, but there is a large range of other health information within young people's files that show health needs are responded to well. Young people's care plans also highlight targets regarding health issues. Staff ensure that each young person's needs are responded to appropriately.

Medication is appropriately administered to young people and regular audits are completed on all medication. Medication is secondary dispensed into a medication organiser although

there has not been a check with the pharmacist to ensure that this is appropriate for the specific medication. This is contrary to Royal Pharmaceutical Society Guidelines due to the potential risks involved. All of the staff have completed training in first aid of some kind.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The home provides a good range of policies and procedures that are used effectively to promote the safety and welfare of young people. Young people's privacy is appropriately secured. For example, staff make sure it is alright to enter bedrooms and telephone calls can be made in private where appropriate. Permissions are in place for the use of door alarms on bedroom doors.

Young people are supported with raising issues when they are unhappy within the home. All young people are given information regarding the complaints procedure on admission to the home and this information is also stored on memory sticks for each young person. The home has a complaints folder showing how complaints are responded to and additional information is recorded within the young people's files.

All staff have completed training in safeguarding procedures and are aware of these with regard to the home. A relationship between the home and the local safeguarding board with relation to specific individuals has led to the home being able to examine some allegations. Information regarding this relationship is not formalised and information is not available on young people's files. All allegations are well recorded within the home's systems and placing social workers are made aware of when allegations are made. However, the computer records are not up to date in relation to the outcomes of allegations. There has been a notable reduction in the number of allegations made at the home over the previous 12 months.

Systems are in place to respond to behaviours of bullying and leaving the home without permission including procedures and ways of recording. Risk assessments are in place regarding both of these behaviours and incidents of both are rare and responded to well when they occur.

Staff promote positive behaviour within the home well. Behaviour management has a bias towards rewards and young people are able to discuss how they receive scores that can be converted into reward money. All staff have completed training in the use of restraints and these are recorded well and referenced within the home's log. There has been a notable reduction in the number of restraints used within the home over the past 12 months. Sanctions are appropriately used and monitoring procedures are in place to ensure inappropriate sanctions are not enforced.

The organisation's staff recruitment checks were inspected on the 6th July 2009 and show that there are robust procedures in place that ensure the safety of the young people. All areas, as required by the standards, are appropriately checked including: criminal records bureau checks; references that are verified; full CV's and identification checks. Where issues have arisen these are discussed within the recruitment process, responded to and recorded. The organisation has responded to a previous recommendation and now checks against the disqualification for caring for children regulations.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Young people receive an outstanding level of individualised support from the staff team and organisation. Independent visitors are available for the young people and attend the home on an occasional basis. Information regarding how to contact these visitors is given to young people on admission and is also on display within the home. All young people have risk assessments in place to support controlled risk activities around the home and off the home's site.

All young people attend the educational provision offered by the organisation and the home's staff are regularly within the school building giving support. A range of educational information is within young people's files, including personal education plans and educational statements. The education provision provides good information regarding young people's development to both annual and statement reviews. Young people are able to discuss success that have been achieved within the school.

The home has a wealth of resources that support activities. Young people complete activity preference forms and these form part of the young people's meetings to help them to decide on the weeks activities. Young people are able to discuss a good range of different activities that they have been involved in both on and off the home's site. The home is situated within a rural area with a wood that is used for a range of activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All young people have a placement plan. These are of an acceptable standard and include all areas as required by the standard. All young people also have a care plan that highlights specific targets and areas that young people are working on with the staff team. The manager is in the process of amalgamating these two documents to provide a clearer awareness of how specific needs are being met.

Young people are involved with their reviews and attend these where appropriate. Minutes of each review are available. Reports written by the home's staff to support the reviews are well written and show that staff have a good awareness of the needs of the young people and how these are being met.

Contact arrangements for young people are recorded within placement plans and these are fully supported by the staff team. Staff are able to discuss difficulties that have been overcome regarding contact and how young people are supported in differing ways.

Young people's meetings are held on a regular basis and these are recorded, although, the minutes of these are occasionally basic. All young people have named key staff who they meet with on a more formal basis. The home uses feedback sheets with the young people to discuss how the week has been for them, raising pertinent successes or areas in need of development.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The home is well looked after by the young people and staff. Communal areas are tidy and clean and bedrooms are appropriately personalised. The home has two small lounges and a dining room area with sufficient space for young people and staff. Young people are proud of their rooms and improvements in their behaviour has resulted in a significant improvement in

some young people's living environment. The road to the home is not in a good state of repair and this is more notable following the winter weather. Plans are in place to repair this. Some of the home's windows are not well-maintained. The home is set within a pleasant rural location.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The home has an up to date Statement of Purpose which is in line with the standard. All young people have access to the young people's guide, this is given to young people on admission to the home and is also available on the young people's memory sticks.

Appraisals of staff are up to date and highlight areas of training need. Staff are supported through regular supervisions and weekly staff meetings. Meetings are well recorded and show that young people's needs are discussed at length. Additional support staff are occasionally involved with staff meetings to highlight areas being worked on with the young people.

The organisation has its own training department and all staff complete a thorough induction course prior to working within the home. All staff have a good range of training opportunities available. Eighty percent of the staff team are appropriately qualified in line with the expectations of the standard. The home has a good range of both experienced and qualified staff who are able to meet the needs of the young people well.

The home is monitored through the regulation 33 visitor and the manager completing regulation 34 monitoring reports on a monthly basis. These systems highlight areas of practice that require some development as well as areas that are being completed well. Regulation 33 reports are forwarded to Ofsted.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Staff are aware of the differing needs of the young people. The staff team attempt to raise awareness of ongoing issues within the world with the young people.

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
17	ensure there is a written policy in place which sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of any allegation of abuse or neglect (regulation 16.1).	26 February 2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure all young people have a clear health plan (NMS 12.2)
- ensure all medication is administered in line with current guidance (NMS 13.1)

- ensure systems are in place to promote the safety of the young people are completed including recording systems (NMS 17.1)
- ensure the access road to the home is in a good state of repair. (NMS 24.3)