

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC398393
Inspection date	8 October 2009
Inspector	Andrew Hewston
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	21 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

The home is set up to accommodate up to two young people aged between 11 and 17 in a detached property in a rural location. The care staff team cares for young people from a range of backgrounds and is able to accommodate young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Each young person has their own rooms which are en suite. The home has a large lounge / dining room with an additional conservatory area to allow young people to play computer games. The large outside area allows young people to enjoy the creation of a bike track.

Summary

Overall this was a good inspection that shows that staff have a good awareness of the care of young people and can demonstrate this in practice.

Appropriate arrangements are in place to promote healthy living and young people are supported with their health appointments. Young people are kept safe through effective recruitment systems and a range of in house systems to combat areas such as bullying and absconding.

Plans for young people are appropriate, and the staff fully support contact arrangements. Staff ensure that young people achieve through regular education and well organised activities that are individually geared to the needs of the young people.

The home is well managed, with staff being appropriately supported and trained within their role. The manager and monthly visitor ensure the home is effectively monitored.

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 regarding this provision.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young people are kept healthy within the home in a range of ways. Young people state that they enjoy the food served and menus show that meals include a range of healthy options. Young people are involved in the development of menus through weekly meetings.

Health plans are in place that show young people receive a good range of health support structures and checks where required. Health plans within placement plans are appropriate. Additional health interventions are able to be accessed through the organisation and involvement with these are well recorded.

All medication is recorded fully when administered and appropriate permissions have been sought regarding the use of medication and first aid. Regular audits are completed on the administration of medication and all staff have completed training in this area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people are supported with a good level of privacy within the home. All have en-suite facilities and young people are able to use the telephone in private. There is a recording system if young people's rooms need to be searched.

The system for receiving and recording of complaints and issues about bullying behaviour is known by the young people. This is given through the young people's guide, the complaints pack received on admission and through discussions within young people's meetings. No complaints, or concerns regarding bullying, have been received by the staff at the home since it's registration.

Appropriate local safeguarding procedures are in place and information is available within the home for staff to access although clear referral procedures are necessary. Staff have completed training in child protection. No safeguarding issues have been raised at the home since it's registration.

Young people that abscond from the home are protected through reporting systems to the police and subsequent recording and checks when young people return. Reports of absconding are completed well and the manager is aware of any significant issues regarding this area.

Staff are trained in the use of physical interventions and diffusion techniques with the young people. When restraints or sanctions have been used with the young people these are appropriately recorded within their files. Referencing of these incidents is not currently fully completed within home to allow sufficient analysis of events, although this is partly done through the regulation 34 assessment. All measures of control are appropriate.

All health and safety checks are completed on a regular basis by the staff team and certification is available with regard to utility checks. All fire checks and drills are completed regularly and fully recorded.

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.

There are very good arrangements in place to ensure that young people are fully supported while living at the home. Independent advocate arrangements are in place to ensure that young people are able to access support external to the home, and there is a registered manager from

another home that is also a designated visitor to the home. Staff are aware of differing external services that are able to be accessed to additionally support young people.

Education information within the home shows that staff support young people well within their educational placement. Education is primarily provided through the organisation and full personal education plans are in place. Placing authorities are able to state improvements in young people's attendance and attitude towards education while being accommodated at the home.

Young people are involved in a wide range of activities while at the home. A staff member is appropriately trained in outdoor education to support the more challenging activities and appropriate risk assessments are completed for all activities. A bike track is in the process of being developed around the side of the house by the young people and they are also able to discuss a wealth of trips and activities that they have both been involved in and are planning towards.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young people's placement plans are clear, showing the targets for their time at the home. Plans are in line with the expectations of the standard and are updated by the young people's key workers. Placement plans written by the home are developed from the information gained from the looked after children documentation, which is also on file.

Reviews are completed on a regular basis and minutes are available from these. The results of reviews effect the development of the placement plans. Young people state that they are fully involved in the review process and have an input into the decision making process.

Contact arrangements also form part of the planning process and the manager is able to discuss the lengths that staff have gone to in order to ensure all young people receive meaningful contact with their families. Such work to achieve this is a credit to the manager and staff at the home. Recordings are completed with relation to all contact that has occurred.

Young people have a strong input into the day to day working of the home, being involved with planning of activities, meals and even the decoration of their bedrooms. Young people's meetings are held and recorded on a regular basis. Records show that young people also have one to one discussions with their key workers on a regular basis.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

No young people are currently in need of pathway plans, some basic independence training is completed in the home however, including areas such as personal hygiene and laundry.

The home is well maintained throughout. Communal rooms are tidy and looked after. Young people's rooms are appropriately personalised and looked after by the young people with appropriate direction from the staff. The home has a range of areas to ensure that young people are able to meet on an individual or group basis, and this also allows areas for young people to 'escape' into. The home is set within a pleasant rural location with no stated issues from surrounding residents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The home has a statement of purpose that appropriately describes the ongoing work that is completed. All areas as required by the standard one form part of the statement. The statement also includes information relating to the staffing in the home with sufficient information as required by standard 30. Each young person is given a handbook on admission to the home. This accurately describes life in the home including some of the rules and expectations from staff.

Staff are supported by the home's management through regular staff meetings and regular supervision. The majority of the staff team have personal development plans through the appraisal system.

Training is organised centrally within the organisation and a good range of training courses are provided. All staff receive an induction course prior to working in the home which is in line with the Children's Workforce Development Council expectations. There are sufficient numbers of staff within the home that are trained up to NVQ at level 3 to ensure that the home is within the expected qualifications standard. The manager ensures that all staff are up to date with required training.

Regular monitoring of the home is completed within the staff team through a quality assurance system. The manager also completes a monthly regulation 34 report and the home is visited by the regulation 33 visitor, also on a monthly basis. Reports relating to this monitoring are available and where poor practice issues are raised there are also reports showing how these have been responded to.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Staff show a high regard to the differing experiences that have effected the young people. Staff are aware of the need to ensure that young people's individual needs are assessed and responded to.

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 Children's 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

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

- ensure a clear safeguarding referral system is available and known to all staff (NMS 17.1)
- ensure the registered manager is able to monitor patterns of measures of control through an effective referencing system (NMS 22.11)
- ensure all staff receive annual appraisals (NMS 28.7).