

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	22 July 2010
Inspector	Andrew Hewston
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	8 October 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 en-suite room. The home has a large lounge/dining room with an additional conservatory area to allow young people to play computer games. In the large outside area the young people enjoy the bike track.

Summary

This was an unannounced visit to the home and included the examination of a range of recording systems and discussions with the manager, staff and young people.

All of the young people were spoken to during the inspection.

The home continues to give a good level of care to the young people. Young people's health needs are assessed and responded to appropriately. Young people are kept safe through some robust systems and staff working effectively with other professionals.

Staff support young people's educational progress well. Activities organised by the home are appropriate. All young people have placement plans, these are well written and show staff have a high awareness of the needs of the young people and how these can be met.

The home is a pleasant place to live in, it is comfortable and well cared for by staff and young people. The home has a strong staff team who meet the needs of the young people well. The staff are supported by an effective and enthusiastic manager.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The home had three recommendations for improving practice at the last inspection. Two of these have been fully completed. There is now a clear referral system in place for safeguarding concerns and all staff are now involved in a rolling programme of appraisals. All behaviour management referencing within the home's systems has not yet been completed.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Health is promoted through clear planning and staff ensuring that appointments are kept by young people. Staff ensure that young people have access to a good range of health professionals, that are either within the organisation or external. Such professionals help to meet the health needs of the young people. All young people are registered with the local GP, optician and dentist.

Young people's medication is administered appropriately and the staff support assessment and reduction programmes relating to specific medications. All staff are trained in the administration

of medication and audits on medication are completed on a regular basis. Sufficient staff have completed training in first aid to meet the needs of the young people. The home's medication cabinet is not sufficiently secure.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people's privacy is supported by the staff team. All young people have their own room and there are systems in place to record if rooms have been searched. Electronic monitoring may be utilised through a door alarm system, although permissions regarding this are sought from the placing social worker.

The home has a robust complaints system and young people and staff know about this. Information is available for young people within young people's handbooks and additional forms within the home. All complaints are investigated and all outcomes have been thoroughly recorded. The home's computer has a direct link to the local safeguarding board to support staff with the reporting of welfare concerns. Safeguarding concerns are responded to quickly and are fully recorded. All staff are trained in dealing with young people's concerns, using the complaints or safeguarding procedures as appropriate.

Young people state that bullying within the home is rare and that when it occurs staff respond well. Information relating to bullying is included within the home's complaints information. Bullying is discussed as part of the key working process. Recording systems are in place to respond to young people that absent themselves without permission. These are then cross referenced within the home's records. Staff are able to discuss how they have worked with young people to reduce incidents of absence without permission.

The home has an appropriate system for recording all behaviours that require additional measures of control by the staff, including sanctions and restraints. All but one incident have been appropriately cross referenced between the young people's and the home's records. All responses to behaviours are appropriate and staff are trained in the use of restraint. Staff ensure that young people are rewarded for positive behaviours.

Staff ensure the ongoing safety of young people through regular and rigorous health and safety checks. All checks relating to fire, gas, portable appliances and the home's electrical system are completed appropriately. Risk assessments relating to young people and the activities that they are involved in are completed.

The organisation's staff recruitment checks were inspected on the 10 May 2010 and show that there are robust procedures in place that ensure the safety of the young people. All checks, as required under the regulations, are appropriately carried out. When issues have arisen these are discussed within the recruitment process, responded to and recorded. Checks against the disqualification for caring for children regulations are also completed as part of recruitment procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young people are supported well by the staff team and professionals external to the home. All young people have access to an independent visitor service and therapeutic support. Staff ensure that young people who require additional external services are referred promptly.

The educational achievements of the young people are well supported by the staff team. Staff are involved with transporting young people to and from school. The home and school work closely to ensure that individual education plans and behaviour plans are linked with the care provision. Home and school staff provide reports for educational statement reviews and looked after children reviews. Positive comments relating to the home and school have been made by an independent reviewing officer.

Young people state that they are involved with a range of activities. Some activity planners are relatively repetitive but this is due, in part, to external restrictions. Young people are involved with activities both within the home and externally. Young people enjoy a good range of day trips out and go on holiday with the staff team.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All young people have a placement plan. Plans include all necessary information and clearly show areas that are being worked on with the young people. The plans are in line with the looked after children documentation from the placing authority. Reviews of placement plans are completed on a regular basis and linked with young people's looked after children reviews. Reports show that staff and young people have a strong input into the review process. Copies of review minutes are available for young people within their files.

Young people and their families are fully supported by the staff team with ensuring contact is held on a regular basis. Staff go to great lengths to make sure that contact is successful. All contact arrangements form part of each young person's placement plan.

Arrangements for coming into the home and moving on are dealt with sensitively and with the full involvement of the young people. Movement to and from the home are completed in line with agreements made at reviews.

All young people are supported with making decisions about their lives and the running of the home through regular house meetings and good key worker meetings. Minutes of young people's meetings show that young people are able to discuss a good range of topics relating to living at the home. Key worker meeting records show that young people are able to discuss different areas of their life on a one-to-one basis regularly.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The accommodation is pleasant, comfortable and appropriate to meet the needs of the young people. The home is being redecorated throughout as part of a rolling programme. Young people's rooms are personalised in line with their wishes and they make use of the large garden area for some activities.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The home has a full management team and managers are aware of their responsibilities towards the organisation of the home and the care of the young people. Staff are supported through monthly team meetings. Minutes of these show that the staff team discuss ongoing issues for individual young people as well as how the staff team works to meet the needs of the young people

The home's Statement of Purpose and young people's guide give a clear picture of the provision and are updated on a regular basis. The Statement of Purpose includes a staffing policy. The home is appropriately staffed to meet the needs of the young people. The organisation's training department ensures that all staff have regular updates of basic courses including safeguarding and restraint. At least 80% of the staff have achieved the National Vocational Qualification at Level 3 in the Caring of Children and Young People.

There is a robust system for monitoring recordings and incidents within the home. This is achieved through a staff monitoring tool as well as the managerial Regulation 34 monitoring procedures and external monitoring through the Regulation 33 visitor. The manager ensures that any areas highlighted needing responding to are rectified in a timely fashion.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Staff promote positive views relating to diversity and there are good examples of where different cultures are promoted, including the use of the world cup competition. The promotion of equality is discussed within young people's meetings and the home has a policy with regards to this area. Staff ensure that young people are supported with issues relating to sexuality within key worker meetings.

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
13	ensure all medication is stored securely. (Regulation 21.1)	20 August 2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure all behaviour management records are referenced within the home's systems. (NMS 22.10)