

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Kevin Whatley
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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

The service aims to provide intensive programmes of care and support to up to three young people aged between eight and 11 on admission. Young people admitted to the setting will have a learning disability or complex needs such as autism. The nature of the service means that a majority of placements will be short to medium-term in duration ranging from approximately one year to 18 months. Education forms a strong part of any placement with the home being purpose built with teaching facilities on site; tuition is provided via an outreach programme as part of an agreement with a local specialised school.

Three young people were being accommodated at the time of the inspection. Two young people were observed during the inspection in interactions with teaching and care staff.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This interim inspection was unannounced and took place during a week day. The focus of the inspection was to review the two recommendations made at the last visit and to assess all key standards found within staying safe. The setting was judged as good with no actions or recommendations made on this occasion. The needs of young people are placed at the centre of care provision. Information about how to complain are provided in specific formats for young people to understand. Staffing levels are good with practice being informed thus reducing the risk of young people harming themselves or others. Behaviour management is clearly a strength of the service with staff working together across the education and care spectrum to provide intensive intervention strategies. Care planning involves experts and this combined with a committed and skilled staff team is having the desired affect of reducing problematic behaviours. Staff work alongside parents and carers to implement consistent care approaches to meet the complex needs of young people within the setting and at the young person's family home. Approaches toward fire safety are excellent with young people provided with regular opportunities to learn what to do in the event of a fire alarm sounding. The setting continues to be well run by the assistant manager and her team who display considerable enthusiasm and determination to meet the specific needs of young people in their care.

Improvements since the last inspection

No actions were made at the last inspection. Two recommendations were made. The first of these related to ensuring confidential information was kept securely. Since the last inspection a cupboard containing confidential logs has been fitted with a suitable

lock and was seen to be kept secure at all times. The second recommendation concerned the need to consider improving the environment to make it more homely. A tour of the building confirmed that many more pictures have been put up, including large framed photographs of the young people currently living in the setting. The premises are looking much brighter in colour with a more lived in and relaxed feel.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Information concerning how to make a complaint is displayed openly in the home, while more easily understood young person's guides are available in different formats to aid communication. A clear process of how complaints will be addressed is in place. No complaints have been recorded since the last inspection and none have been received by Ofsted.

A robust approach toward child protection ensures young people are as safe as can be expected. Staff receive training in safeguarding and clearly have a sound understanding of all key child protection matters and protocols. All policies and procedures are produced in line with current local and national safeguarding legislation and practices. The culture of the setting encourages openness around child protection, with any unexplained marks or bruises being recorded on body maps and considered thoroughly.

The complex behaviours of young people are addressed through rigorous assessment and planning. All young people have individualised behaviour management plans which focus on their particular issues. Detailed risk assessments are completed which highlight the risk young people may be to themselves or others with clear plans and strategies in place to reduce any identified concerns. Strategies are implemented throughout the day including education hours within the home. Care staff work closely with their education counterparts to provide a consistent and coherent approach to managing the individual behaviours of young people. Such practice ensures young people receive the same responses to their actions from all staff, particular crucial when caring for young people with autistic traits. This in turn allows for accurate assessment and analysis by all parties concerned with the young person including experts in the field of learning disabilities. The outcomes of intervention strategies have led to the successful reduction in problematic behaviours.

The level of physical interventions at the setting are reasonable. Staff are trained in the model of physical intervention adopted by the organisation. Staff are very keen to limit the need to intervene physically and only do so when necessary. The idea of

de-escalation is fundamental to the ethos of the setting and is clearly seen in practice. When physical intervention has been used comprehensive records are kept which include details of any antecedence and an evaluation of the suitability of its implementation. A majority of restraints are used to guide young people away from situations. Daily de-briefs take place at the end of every shift so staff can reflect on the behaviours of young people and consider how meaningful practice had been.

Where appropriate parents and carers are provided with guidance and support to continue behaviour management strategies when the young people go home. This includes working together with parents and carers within the setting and at the young person's own home itself.

The health and safety of all those who live and work at the setting are taken seriously. All required servicing, tests and checks are undertaken in regard to fire fighting, gas and electrical equipment. Regular fire alarm and emergency lighting tests are completed. The approach taken regarding fire safety is excellent. Fire drills take place every week in response to young people needing to be reminded of what to do should the alarm sound. Communication aids are located by each alarm with staff assisting young people to make connections between an alarm sounding and the need to leave the building. No environmental hazards were identified during the inspection.

A rigorous recruitment process ensures no members of staff work at the home until all necessary checks and references have been confirmed.

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.

