

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC405285
Inspection date	02/03/2011
Inspector	Stephen Smith
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	15/11/2010
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2011

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 Crispins, 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 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 home provides full-time care for up to four children who have autism and learning disabilities. It is located in a residential area with public transport links with the city centre. There are shops and community facilities nearby. The home has a lounge and a dining area which is attached to the kitchen which children can access with support. There is also a second kitchen for the provision of food for those with special dietary requirements. The home has a conservatory which provides another communal area for children to spend time in. Each child has their own bedroom. There are bathing and toilet facilities offering the choice of a bath or shower close to bedrooms. Externally the home has enclosed gardens that are accessible to the young people. The home has sole use of a people carrier to enable young people to attend activities and visit places of interest.

Four young people currently live in the home. One was present for part of the inspection but did not participate in it.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

This was an unannounced, interim inspection. It assessed the key national minimum standards associated with how young people are enabled to stay safe. The inspection also assessed whether the home had met the recommendations made at the previous inspection on 15 November 2010. As this was an interim inspection, it did not assess all of the key national minimum standards.

This home provides satisfactory outcomes for young people and is good in many areas. It has addressed the matters identified at the last inspection, although not all have yet been completed.

It generally works well to keep children safe. Relationships between the staff and young people are very positive and this helps them manage young people's behaviour in a positive manner. Young people's privacy and dignity is respected and promoted by the provision of care. Child protection arrangements are well developed in the home. The physical safety of the building and its services is well assured and staff members receive good training to help keep children safe. The manager has not completed level 4 NVQ or equivalent in management and the Statement of Purpose does not contain enough detail in all areas.

The home works hard to identify children's wishes and needs and has developed comprehensive and individualised plans to respond to these. It develops positive behaviour support plans that are good. These are detailed and specific. Work is

ongoing to develop these further by the addition of individually specific guidelines and training for any physical intervention necessary. Records of physical intervention used are detailed and accurate. However, physical intervention is used inappropriately in some situations. This means that children are not as well protected as they should be. The home does not identify well enough, in young people's care plans, how it minimises the restrictions on their liberty caused by the fact that its external doors are locked for safety reasons. Additionally, some risk assessments relating to young people are not sufficiently detailed or specific.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection four recommendations were made.

The home was asked to attach its medication cabinet securely to the wall and to ensure that every incident of physical intervention was recorded in the restraint record. The home has taken action to fully comply with these recommendations.

It was recommended that the home develop its Statement of Purpose to contain full details of the relevant experience and qualifications of its staff members. It was also recommended that the manager gains a qualification at level 4 NVQ or equivalent in management. The home has taken action to respond to these but have yet not completely met the recommendations. Work on a revised Statement of Purpose has started and the manager has enrolled on appropriate training.

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.

The home's practice, underpinned by policy, promotes young people's privacy and dignity. Confidentiality is maintained by the home's recording. Information about how to complain is provided to young people in a range of accessible formats based on their individual needs. This is supported by additional information supplied to parents. This helps ensure that young people's well-being is promoted and that they have a say about how the home is run.

Children are protected by the home's safeguarding procedures and working practices. Staff members receive good and regular training in safeguarding matters. This is undertaken using a range of methods including on-line training and the use of case studies.

The home has appropriate procedures in place for staff to follow should a young person go missing or get lost. The nature of the young people accommodated and

the home's high staffing levels means that no children have gone missing or been absent without authority. The home provides care to young people who are very vulnerable and are unable to go out unsupervised. The home's premises are secure to ensure the safety of the young people given their specific needs. The measures taken are recorded in young people's placement plans along with the reasons for the restrictions and are supported by risk assessments. However, young people's plans do not all set out how the impact of any restrictions imposed on their liberty will be minimised. This means that young people are not supported sufficiently well to have as much individual freedom as possible for them.

Young people's behaviour is dealt with in an individualised manner that is based on young people's own needs and preferences. Positive measures are used to encourage, shape and reward good behaviour. Behaviour is managed in a way that is sensitive to the needs of other young people. The home's staff team receive very good training that is provided in respect of each individual young person. Placement plans and positive behaviour support plans are good and help ensure that good behaviour is promoted. Plans are excellent in considering young people's behaviour, any triggers and how to work proactively to promote positive behaviour and avoid incidents. This positive and proactive approach helps ensure that young people live in an environment in which they feel safe and that promotes their development. Staff are trained in physical intervention into young people's behaviour should this be necessary and work is ongoing in the home to develop specific and individualised plans to manage these interventions. Records of any physical intervention used are detailed and clearly describe antecedents, methods used to diffuse the situation and the outcome of the incident. Physical intervention is generally used only as a last resort to prevent children harming themselves or others. However, this is not always the case. For example, in two recent incidents, physical intervention took place inappropriately in situations in which young people or property were not at risk of injury or damage. In these situations action had clearly been taken with good intentions but, nevertheless, breached regulations and potentially put a young person at additional risk.

Risk assessments of young people's behaviour and activities are carried out and recorded. The home is working to review and develop these. However, risk assessments relating to individual children and their behaviour are not sufficiently clear or detailed to give children the protection they should have. For example, hazards are often not identified in sufficient detail, in some situations hazards and control measures are confused and the action to be taken is not always detailed enough.

The physical safety of the home and other health and safety matters are well managed. This ensures that the premises are safe for young people to live in. Essential periodic maintenance and checks of equipment help to keep young people safe. Fire drills are carried out regularly and all staff and young people are involved so they know what to do to stay safe.

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
22	ensure that physical restraint is only used to prevent likely injury to the child concerned or to others, or likely serious damage to property. (Regulation 17(1) of the Children's Homes Regulations 2001)	31/03/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home does not exceed the measures that can be taken to

prevent a child from leaving without permission under current legislation and government guidance. Specifically, that all placement plans clearly set out how the effects of any restriction of liberty made on the grounds of safety can be minimised (NMS 19.7)

- ensure that young people's individual risk assessments are sufficiently specific and detailed (NMS 26.2)
- ensure that the Statement of Purpose contains all the information in Schedule 1 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2001. Specifically, that full details of the relevant experience and qualifications of staff members are described (NMS 1.2)
- ensure that the manager has a qualification at level 4 NVQ in management or another qualification that matches the competencies required by that NVQ. (NMS 34.3)