

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Sharron Escott / Suzanne Young
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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

This children's home looks after three children with emotional and behavioural difficulties, aged between 11 and 17. There should be no more than a five year age gap between children, unless they are siblings. The service offers planned and emergency admissions, and provides short, medium and long term placements. Children are likely to have had previous failed residential care placements and require high levels of support, called 'Support Plus.'

The home is operated by a national private provider of services for children, and there are other homes in the region nearby. It is a detached house on a housing estate with good transport links to the city centre and to community leisure, educational and health facilities. There is an independent clinical psychology and psychotherapy service that can be commissioned separately for individual children. The manager is registered in respect of this home and another children's home operated by the organisation.

Three children currently live at the home and all took part the inspection.

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, and covered the national minimum standards in the Every Child Matters outcomes area of staying safe. It looked at the progress to meet shortfalls identified at the last inspection in Aug 2010.

This service has many strengths. Children live in a stable, effectively run home that is organised around individuals needs, and prioritises and seeks to improve their life experiences. The manager and staff team are committed to providing young people with a positive residential experience, promoting their participation and consultation in matters relating to their daily living and well-being. As a result, the young people are very happy, settled and achieving positive outcomes. However the previous key inspection the overall judgement was rated good. Recommendations made at the key inspection have not been acted upon fully. One action and two recommendations have been identified at this interim inspection, the overall judgement has been judged to be satisfactory. Areas for improvement include: the Registered Manager ensuring all recent documentation and risk assessments for any new proposed placement is within the home on admission. This enables the staff team to manage any identified risks and the impact to existing residents is considered. Fire evacuation procedures are in line with the homes own policies and procedures and meets the national minimal standards including the evacuation at night within a twelve month

period. The home staffing rota should include the full names of staff on duty and the management time planned within the home should also be documented on this rota.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last key inspection the Registered Manager was asked to address two recommendations

The first recommendation related to ensuring the needs of the child being placed, and the likely effects of his/her admission upon existing group of residents, are taken into account, and recorded, in decision and on admission to the home. The home has made satisfactory progress by ensuring procedures are in place, however these were not fully completed during the last admission of a child to the home. These documents were not available on inspection or at the time the admission was made therefore this recommendation has been reinstated as a regulatory action. The second recommendation identified shortfalls in the homes rota. The homes rota does not record staff's full names and the managerial time spent within the home. Records evidence this is an area of development to meet the recommendation made. This recommendation is to be reinstated in this report.

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.

Young people privacy and confidentiality is promoted by staff who clearly understand an effective policy. Young people have their own keys to their bedrooms and say the staff respect their privacy and always knock before entering their room. There are facilities available for the young people to make and receive calls in private, or they may use their mobile telephone subject to risk assessment and in accordance to their care and placement plans.

Details of the homes complaints procedure is identified in the young person's guide. Forms with pre paid envelopes are accessible in the young person's quiet room. The central log identifies no complaints have been made since the last inspection The young people stated that they did not have any complaints but if they did they felt they would be listened to.

There are currently no safeguarding concerns in relation to young people placing themselves, or others at risk or significant harm. The majority of staff have received safe guarding training within the last 12 months. The manager is currently reviewing the homes safe guarding policies and procedures to ensure they are specific to the home.

Staff are vigilant and aware of the risk of bullying. The home facilitates training workshops for young people that includes role play on bullying and different types of bullying, ranging from verbal to homophobic and cyber bullying. Young people stated they enjoyed their last session on bullying; the certificate that was awarded was proudly displayed in the front room.

Young people are protected through good levels of supervision, the staff team are appropriately trained should a young person be absent without authority. Clear and effective policies and procedures underpin good staff practice. This has resulted in a reduction of the number of young people being absent without authority that shows staff are using effective strategies.

Young people are supported and encouraged to develop positive behaviours by the use of individualised rewards and incentives rather than sanctions. Young people comment on any sanctions given, identifying that they are reasonable and fair. All Staff are trained in a method of physical intervention. The use of any intervention is recorded clearly in a separate bound document. These documents hold all information required, including a description of the method used and all relevant agencies informed.

Health and safety checks are completed at a good standard; these include a fire risk assessment, safety checks, gas and electrical safety. The staff and young take part in frequent evacuation drills. However night time evacuations have not taken place within the last 12 months. This has a potential risk that young people will not know the correct drill in the event of a fire at night. General maintenance is an ongoing programme, the young people shared they have participated in the selection of new decorating material for the front room. Individual risk assessments are in place for two young people. One young person's individual risk assessment had been reviewed but not placed on their file for seven months. This has a potential to compromise the staff who manage individual risks. Individual risk assessments are completed if a risk is relevant and therefore risk management is more responsive than pro-active.

The home has a thorough recruitment process that ensures all necessary checks are completed prior to a member of staff starting work. The home has benefited from having a strong, experienced and well trained manager who has maintained a full staff team since the home has been registered. This has promoted consistency and continuity of care and support for the young people in placement and is reflected in the positive outcomes being achieved.

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
5	ensure the needs of the child concerned, and the likely effects of his/her admission upon the existing group of residents, are taken into account, and recorded, in decisions on admission to the home (standard 5.7)	01/05/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure the fire drills, including evacuation of staff and children at night take place in a 12 month period, and are recorded (NMS 26.8)
- ensure the homes records are kept in accordance with Schedule 4 and 6. For example, that there is a record of all staff working in the home, and the rota shows full names of staff and managerial time in the home (NMS 33.1)
- ensure the registered person regularly reviews the implementation and effectiveness of action identified in young people's risk assessments. (NMS 26.3)

