

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Maureen Hamer
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Date of last inspection	20/07/2010
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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 home is operated and managed by a national organisation and provides accommodation for an associated residential special school.

The home provides care and accommodation for up to five young people aged nine to seventeen years who have emotional, behavioural and educational difficulties. It is located in a rural area and close to community services.

A commitment to a therapeutic approach underpins the philosophy of care within a homely environment. The home aims to promote social inclusion and to provide each young person the opportunity to develop their maximum potential through the delivery of an extended curriculum that is based on education and care.

Young people have single bedrooms with appropriate bathroom facilities and proportionate communal space which includes a kitchen and two reception areas.

There is a small area of outside space at the rear of the home which is mainly laid as a patio.

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 taking place during one day in the week. Four young people returned home from school and two spoke to the inspector during the inspection. This inspection focused on the actions and recommendations from the previous inspection and on evaluating the service against the staying safe outcome area. Four action and two recommendations are raised as a result of this inspection.

The outcome of this inspection was satisfactory. The staff team are committed to promoting the welfare of children. Young people benefit from good staffing levels which enables good relationships between young people and staff to be formed. Young people are encouraged to express their views and to raise issues that cause them concern. Children's behaviour is assessed well but there is a need for a more integrated approach to the management of challenging behaviour. The number of physical restrains is high and sometimes used to gain compliance.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were four actions and one recommendation made at the last inspection. The first action concerned the need for complaints to be properly recorded. There is now

a complaints book in place for both internal and external complaints and it is being appropriately used. The second action focused on ensuring restraint and sanctions records are monitored sufficiently by the management team to review patterns and strategies being implemented. Records of restraint are signed by the acting manager, although evidence of evaluating the need for such intervention is still lacking. The third action addressed the need to record and review areas of need within care plans. Care plans now include written action plans that are completed well. The final action concerned having in place a service specific Statement of Purpose. The Statement of Purpose now meets the requirement to include all matters listed in Schedule 1. One recommendation made at the previous inspection concerned the need to review the key working process to ensure more than one member of staff took on the role. There are now three key workers in place to provide individual guidance and support is provided to young people.

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.

Staff pay regard for young people's privacy. The use of CCTV used in the corridors of the home, whilst used on the basis of keeping young people safe, does not make for a homely environment. The setting's Statement of Purpose confirms the use of CCTV, however written consent from placing authorities is not in place. All young people have their own personalised bedroom. Staff are discreet regarding discussing issues related to young people and confidential information is kept in an appropriate locked facility.

A complaints procedure and guidance is in place. Young people know how to raise concerns and staff respond appropriately. Details of how to complain are displayed in the home a children's version is not available. No complaints have been recorded since the last inspection and none have been received by Ofsted.

The welfare of young people is promoted. Safeguarding policies and guidance are up to date. Staff receive regular training and support to promote young people's welfare and they display a sound understanding of management of child protection matters. A child protection related matter which led to liaison with the local authority children's services, although being addressed appropriately, had not been notified to Ofsted. There is currently no record maintained on the premises to log such notifications; child protection related details are maintained centrally within the organisation.

The bullying policy and guidance appropriately addresses the management of bullying including actions to counter bullying. Young people were asked if they had

concerns about bullying and they reported no concerns. However there was contradictory information from staff regarding what they consider the levels of bullying behaviours to be, ranging from low to high showing some potential inconsistencies in approach.

Staff fully understand and implement the policy and procedure for young people who are absent without consent. Young people are informed of the need to gain permission before leaving the premises. On occasion physical restraint is being used to bar the exit of young people from leaving the premises. While the intention is to protect young people from harm, the frequency of such practice indicates a planned response and is therefore potentially restricting the liberty of young people without legal grounds.

The challenging behaviours of young people are known with risk assessments completed on young people's files. Behaviour management plans are maintained which provide a guide to staff. During the school day young people receive therapy and counselling to address their emotional and behavioural issues however an integrated approach linking such intervention from the school with behaviour management strategies at the setting is lacking.

Staff are trained in the use of physical intervention. Since the last inspection there been a high number of restraints, with a significant percentage being holds on the ground. The physical restraints log, although confirming basic details of the event, does not evidence any management evaluation of the incident in question including the appropriateness of the intervention used. Following the use of physical restraint young people are not encouraged to sign or record their comments.

Young people are aware of sanctions with the implementation of such measures being consistently applied. This includes making financial contributions to damage caused to the property.

Staff follow systems to ensure the physical safety and security of young people living in the home is well maintained. Young people are protected from the risk of fire; risk assessments are undertaken and appropriate measures put in place. Equipment including gas and electrical appliances are regularly serviced to ensure they are in good working order. When issues arise action is taken to report ineffectual equipment in a timely fashion.

The organisation has a suitable recruitment procedure which ensures no staff work with young people until all required checks have been completed.

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 no measure of control, restraint or discipline is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to the regulations (Regulation 17)	25/04/2011
20	notify without delay the relevant persons or agencies of the matters set out in Schedule 5 in particular instigation and outcome of any child protection enquiry involving a child accommodated at the home in accordance with (Regulation 16 (2)(c))	25/04/2011
9	ensure that electronic or mechanical monitoring devices for the surveillance of children are only used in a children's home in accordance with the regulation, this refers to the use of CCTV within the home and gaining consent (Regulation 22)	25/04/2011
17	maintain a written record to be kept of any allegation of abuse or neglect, and of the actions taken in response. (Regulation 16 (2) (d))	25/04/2011

Recommendations

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

- developing a written complaints policy and procedure is provided in a suitable summary or format to children at the home (NMS 16.5)
- implement the anti bullying policy and develop staff awareness of what constitutes bullying type behaviour. (NMS18.3)