

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Carole Moore
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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 residential provision is in a 1920s house situated in the Worcestershire countryside. There are eight single bedrooms, two dining rooms, two living rooms and a sensory room. The house has bathrooms with showers and wet room with temperature controlled taps. Children's bedrooms will have variety of equipment provided to suit their relaxation styles. In addition children will be able to use art room, kitchen, outdoor swimming pool and a playroom outside of school hours. The large garden will have several areas of interest and stimulation including a sensory garden, patio area, work shed, vegetable and fruit patch, water play area, play equipment, all weather paths, coppice and nature area with a pond and small animal area.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

The purpose of this unannounced inspection is to monitor the home's performance against the key standards in the national minimum standards for children's homes. The home has not as yet provided accommodation to children since it was first registered in August 2010. Our inspection methodology relies on evidence found at the time of inspection and this essentially includes users' views about the service. As this evidence is not available when there are no children present, we have completed a proportionate inspection; the purpose of which is to decide that, should an admission be made, the service would be able to work to a satisfactory standard. Key standards in outcome areas, being healthy, staying safe and organisation are examined. The Registered Manager was present during the inspection.

There have been no admissions or changes made to structure of the home since registration. Policies and procedures are in place to cover all standards examined across the outcome areas in this report. Policies contain good detailed information about how the home will be run. Good recording systems are in place and training has been provided to staff. However, evidence regarding the use of these systems is not available. The home is in an excellent decorative state and completely ready for children to be placed.

The Registered Manager has clear strategies to be implemented if a referral is made to the home. The service would be able to operate to a satisfactory standard should an admission be made.

Improvements since the last inspection

This is the first inspection since registration in August 2010.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

There are good policies and procedures in place to cover all the key standards in this outcome area. In the event of young people being admitted to the home the systems ensure that their health needs will be identified, supported and safeguarded.

The Registered Manager plans to provide young people with a balanced and varied diet. Special diets will be catered for and a nutritionalist will be available for consultation purposes. Staff receive the appropriate training in basic food hygiene and a cook has been employed and will be responsible for the preparation and cooking of meals.

The Registered Manager is able to demonstrate how she plans to identify the health needs of the young people and ensure that services are provided to meet them. She states that young people will be well supported by a range of health professionals. In addition to routine medical checks, where appropriate, specialist services, such as, speech and language therapist, music therapist, occupational therapist, nurse, psychological services will be provided. Health plans and recording systems are in place and offer detailed formats for ensuring the health needs of young people are identified and met.

The policies and procedures in place ensure the safe handling, administration and disposal of medication. Appropriate storage facilities are available. The staff team will be responsible for administering medication and they are appropriately trained. There are clear strategies in place to regularly audit the medication processes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The Registered Manager is able to explain how she intends to promote the privacy and dignity of young people in their day-to-day care. Training is provided during staff induction and this will be reinforced by the Registered Manager in daily practice. A cordless phone would be provided for young people to make confidential calls and rooms are available for them to see their visitors in private if this is appropriate. A room search policy is in place.

There is an effective and robust system in place to record, address and resolve any concerns made known by young people. Systems are in place to record and deal with both internal and external complaints. These include records of the actions taken and the outcome. Information will be provided to young people at the time of admission to explain what to do if they are unhappy and how to make a complaint. There are excellent communication aids already in place to help young people where communication is limited. Young people will also have access to an independent advocacy service.

The Registered Manager is aware of her responsibilities to report any child protection incident to the relevant authorities. Safeguarding procedures and guidance are available at the home. The manager and all staff are trained in basic child protection and have also completed safeguarding training with the Local Authority's Safeguarding Board.

Young people will be protected from bullying as the home presents a clear commitment to promoting behaviour that is respectful. Social stories will be used to support young people with any behaviour that is perceived to be harmful or upsetting. There is also clear staff guidance for reporting any event where a young person is absent from the home without permission. The Registered Manager has already spoken to the local police and developed clear protocols with them.

Excellent formats are in place to provide staff with all the relevant information to complete detailed behaviour management plans and risk assessments. Systems are in place to record any sanctions or restraints, to assess the effectiveness and consequences and include young people's views. The Registered Manager is keen to reward positive behaviour and, therefore, reduce the need for sanctions. De-escalation and restraint training is provided for staff.

The management of health and safety processes is robust. This will help to protect young people from the risk of harm or injury. The home has systems and procedures in place to ensure that the health and safety of young people is monitored and promoted.

Robust recruitment procedures take place in line with the provider's recruitment and selection process. The Registered Manager takes an active role in this process and has a good understanding of the systems. Recruitment files were examined and robust procedures are in place. Visitors to the home sign in the visitors' book and, where appropriate, identification is required. This practice ensures that staff working with and having contact with young people have received the appropriate checks.

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 satisfactory.

The Statement of Purpose provides prospective young people, their families and placing authorities with detailed information about the home. A child friendly guide is also available for young people.

The Registered Manager has almost completed the leadership and management award. The core staff team at the home have all completed their National Vocational Qualification in Caring for Children and Young People at Level 3 or its equivalent. All staff have completed an induction programme and all the mandatory training. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure staff receive appropriate supervision and annual appraisals.

A sample of a young person's file is available and information is stored appropriately in a safe and secure place.

A person has been identified to carry out the monthly visits to the home in order to monitor the welfare of the young people and this will take place immediately. There have been no quality assurance visits since registration.

Should the home reopen, the Registered Manager intends to reform the core staff team prior to the admission of any young person to enable them to meet as a staff team, discuss information and prepare the home for an admission. The Registered Manager has clear strategies to be implemented if a referral is made to the home. The service would be able to operate to a satisfactory standard should an admission be made.