

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Catherine Ross
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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 is a children's home run by a local authority. It provides care for two young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties between the age of 10 and 17 years. It is located in a city suburb and is within easy reach of community resources and facilities.

There is a lounge/diner, kitchen and toilet on the ground floor. On the first floor there are three bedrooms and a bathroom. Each young person has their own bedroom and the third bedroom is used as a staff office and sleep-in room. There are gardens to the front and rear of the home. Staffing is flexible depending on the needs of the young people. There is always a member of staff on sleep-in duty and on-call arrangements are in place.

Two young people were living at the home at the time of this inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection following a key inspection visit in July 2010. The inspection focused upon how the service protects and safeguards the welfare of children and young people. It also explored progress made on recommendations made at the last key inspection. The other outcome areas of being healthy, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution, economic well-being and organisation were not assessed on this occasion. The two recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed.

Young people enjoy living at the home and confirm their privacy is respected. Young people's achievements are highly valued and they are supported and encouraged to make progress towards developing acceptable behaviour. One minor shortfall has been raised at this inspection in relation to the recording of sanctions however this does not outweigh continuous strengths in providing a child centred service.

Improvements since the last inspection

Two recommendations were made at the last inspection.

The frequency of administering homely remedies medication is recorded on the medication record meaning young people's welfare is safeguarded.

The risk assessment regarding the possible hazards presented by the windows on

the first floor has been updated and the risk of harm is assessed to be low. The risk assessment is regularly reviewed meaning risk to young people is minimised.

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.

Young people's privacy is respected. Young people have keys to their bedrooms and staff knock on bedroom doors before entering. Room searches are recorded and all confidential information is kept secure. Staff are clear about their responsibility around data protection and about treating information confidentially.

Young people know how to make a complaint should they wish to and staff would support them in doing so if necessary. Young people are told about complaints processes when they first enter the house and also about a grumbles sheet which young people can use if they do not want to make a formal complaint. No complaints have been received since the previous inspection. Staff and young people have developed links with the local community and staff work hard to help young people maintain their relationships with relatives and other significant people in their lives. This is reflected in compliments received by the home.

Staff receive regular updates in safeguarding training and where safeguarding incidents occur, staff follow procedures appropriately and the welfare of young people is protected. Young people who are absent without authority are responded to positively on return. Staff work with young people to help minimise the risks they face by being absent without authority. Staff and young people have positive relationships and young people feel they can talk to staff about any concerns; this helps protect young people from the risk of harm.

Bullying behaviour is strongly discouraged and if it does occur staff support young people appropriately. Behaviour management plans are set in conjunction with young people and young people's opinions are sought during any reward or sanction given. Staff are proactive in supporting young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour and behaviour management techniques such as restraint are rarely used. Young people like living at the home and their achievements are highly valued. Rewards and incentives are given frequently, however where sanctions are used the duration and effectiveness of the sanction is not recorded in all instances. This could lead to sanctions and rewards being used in an inconsistent manner.

Health and safety measures within the home are up to date. All relevant fire checks are carried out appropriately, staff receive regular training and fire drills are carried out in line with regulations. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated.

Consequently young people, staff and visitors are protected from harm.

Staff recruitment files were not available for inspection. However, there have been no changes to the recruitment policy and practices since the home was registered.

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?

Recommendations

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

- ensure a record of the use of sanctions includes the duration and effectiveness of the sanction. (NMS 22.10)