

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	John Chivers
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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 home is owned by Calcot Services for Children, an established company which administers a number of other registered children's homes in the county. The home is a modern detached property situated in a semi-rural area and is indistinguishable as a children's home. The exterior and interior of the property are very well maintained and all communal and private space areas are decorated and furnished to a high standard. The home is registered to accommodate a maximum of three young people from 5 years to 17 years who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home aims to provide high quality care and support to young people with a wide range of needs. The home meets the standards required for registration and the home's management remained helpful and cooperative throughout the registration process.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This is the home's first inspection since its registration. The inspection was a full inspection and unannounced. All of the key national minimum standards for children's homes were inspected. There were no previous actions or recommendations and only one recommendation is made as a result of this inspection. Despite the home's limited time of operation, the service is organised and managed to a good standard and affords an equally good standard of care and support to the resident young people, having full regard for equality and diversity throughout its operation.

Two young people were resident at the home, however due to prior appointments did not take part in the inspection process.

Improvements since the last inspection

This is the home's first inspection since its registration. Therefore there were no areas previously identified for improvement.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young people enjoy a balanced and healthy diet and any special medical, cultural and preferential diets are catered for. Young people are involved in cooking nights and assist staff in shopping for provisions and meal preparation. Staff attend food

hygiene training and the home's catering arrangements meet the standards of the local environmental health department, having gained a four star award at the last food hygiene inspection. The kitchen is modern, of domestic size and well equipped. Provisions are safely and correctly stored and refrigerator and freezer temperatures are taken and recorded.

Young people are registered with a local general practitioner and other health care services and signed parental consent for emergency medical treatment is held. Young people have detailed health and medical histories of which staff are aware of. Their progress, development or issues are monitored and recorded on their individual care plans. Young people benefit from being encouraged to lead active and healthy life styles and staff continuously advise them in these areas, having regard for and being aware of any medical conditions young people may have.

Young people receive safe medication administration from staff who are appropriately trained in first aid and medication administration and training in these areas is on-going. Risk assessments regarding medication administration are held. Medication administered is clearly recorded and medication is securely held in a locked cabinet. Medication stocks are audited every two weeks and old or discarded medication is returned to the pharmacy for disposal and a record is kept. Accidents to young people are clearly recorded.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff are aware of the importance of confidentiality, treat young people with dignity and respect their privacy. Young people can receive appropriate visitors in private and have access to a telephone without reference to staff. Young people have lockable facilities in their bedrooms in which to keep valued and treasured possessions and toilet and bathing facilities afford good privacy. Confidential records are securely held in locked cabinets within a locked office.

Young people and their parents have unrestricted access to the home's complaints procedure and any complaint received is taken seriously by the home. Staff receive training on complaints at induction and this is reinforced periodically at staff team meetings. Young people are given information on complaints on admission and staff are clear young people know how to complain if necessary. Young people's help and advice lines are displayed around the home should a young person wish to refer a complaint externally. Complaints are clearly recorded and show action taken and an outcome.

Young people are protected from harm and abuse by the home's close supervision arrangements and staff awareness in this area. Some staff are trained in child protection and safeguarding and others are due to attend such training in the near future. Young people learn about their personal safety via their individual schools' curriculum and this is reinforced by staff in discussion and direct work with young people. Any child protection issues are clearly recorded and appropriate notifications

made. Staff are alert in this area and have full regard for young people's safety and well-being.

Young people live in a bullying free environment and no significant issues in this area are evident. Staff are aware and alert to such activity and the home liaises with other organisations in the promotion of anti-bullying awareness and practice. The home has clear missing persons procedures and a missing persons protocol in place with the local police. However no unauthorised absences have occurred.

Young people's behaviour is now well managed following some issues in this area soon after the home's registration. Some staff are trained in behaviour management and others are scheduled to attend such training in the near future. There are clear and detailed behaviour management plans in place which are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. Young people are rewarded for good behaviour by praise, rewards and prizes which helps them understand what is expected of them in terms of general conduct. Staff interact and engage young people appropriately and young people are now becoming more settled into the home's boundaries and routines. Restraint and sanctions are clearly recorded and such actions are necessary and appropriate in the circumstances described in the records.

The home takes active steps to keep young people, staff and visitors safe from the inherent risks of fire and other potential hazards. Standards of cleanliness and hygiene are high throughout the home and no safety hazards are evident in the areas of the premises accessed.

The home's has regard for equal opportunities and equality and diversity throughout its recruitment process. The home's recruitment and vetting procedures are robust and help to ensure only suitable staff are employed to look after the young people. Staff personnel files hold all required information including two written references and checks via the Criminal Records Bureau at enhanced level.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young people receive a sound level of care and support from key workers. Key workers have daily contact with young people and write three month assessment reports. The reports are prepared to a very good standard and are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. Additional support from a range of external professionals and specialist support groups are also available. Young people have access to advocates as appropriate.

All young people attend main stream day schools and staff liaise effectively with schools that young people attend, having daily handovers with teaching staff and attending school functions and events as appropriate. Staff encourage young people to complete homework and engage them in a range of education, learning and leisure activities. Young people are also encouraged to read before settling at night. The home has a good range of play and learning equipment and materials. Staff are

aware of young people's personal education plans which are held at the home. However a copy of one plan had not yet been forwarded to the home despite reminders to the placing authority regarding this. Young people are proud of their achievements and copies of their achievement certificates are held and displayed.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young people benefit from having comprehensive care plans in place which cover a wide range of areas. The care plans are prepared by key workers and are very well written and reviewed on a regular basis. Young people's questionnaires are also attached to the plans and convey their views and opinions on the content of the plans.

Young people have their cases reviewed within the statutory time scales and their key workers make an excellent written contribution to the review reports. Young people and their parents attend the reviews as appropriate. Any contact young people have with their parents or significant others is clearly recorded on their individual contact sheets.

The home's admissions criteria and process helps to ensure only suitable young people are admitted to the home and are able to benefit from the service provided. Currently no young people have left the home. However strategies and systems are in place to cater for such events via transition plans and independence and life skills training opportunities.

Young people learn the responsibilities of decision-making, expressing opinions and exercising choice via a range of individual and group forums. Agendas, discussion and decisions are clearly recorded in forum meeting minutes. Parents and other relevant individuals and agencies contribute to the consultation process via direct discussion and questionnaires.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

Appropriate strategies and systems are in place regarding preparing young people to leave care or move from the home. However to date no young people have been discharged from the home. Young people are supplied with pocket money and a clothing allowance and accurate records of monetary transactions and purchases are kept. Young people have access to toiletries which they keep in their bedrooms.

Young people live in a safe and very well maintained home which is decorated and furnished to an excellent standard. The environment is homely and comfortable and provides adequate communal space for the young people, being well equipped with a high standard of fixtures and fittings and domestic equipment. Young people's bedrooms are decorated and furnished to an equally high standard and are

personalised with a range of their personal effects. Toilet and bathing facilities are of an excellent standard and afford good privacy. Standards of cleanliness and hygiene are high throughout the home and no safety hazards are evident in the areas of the premises accessed.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The multi-cultural staff team are able to meet the needs of young people from a range of differing backgrounds. Despite the limited time since its registration, the home is organised and managed to a good standard and affords an equally good standard of care and support to the resident young people.

Young people are given sufficient information about the home via a comprehensive Statement of Purpose and young people's guide. The information provides an accurate description of the service and facilities at the home.

Young people receive a good level of care and support from a staff team of varying experience, qualifications and skills. Less experienced staff are closely supervised by their more experienced colleagues. Whilst staff training and supervision is in its infancy, the combination of these inputs to date are sufficient to meet the needs of the current group of young people and enable the home to achieve its aims and objectives. Appropriate systems are in place for annual staff appraisals. Staff are committed and enthusiastic and are supportive of the home's management and ethos. Staff confirm the home's commitment to equality and diversity and that no discriminatory attitudes or practices exist within the service. There is sound communication between the staff team with staff handovers being held daily and full staff team meetings held fortnightly.

Young people benefit from living in a home which has sound and effective quality assurance systems in place and actively seeks the views and opinions of parents and other relevant agencies regarding the standard of care it provides. There is an annual development plan and the home has a current insurance liability certificate which complies with the organisations responsibilities as an employer.

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 the outstanding personal education plan is pursued from the appropriate placing authority. (NMS 14.2)

