

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC453726
Inspector	Suzanne Young
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Aston Children's Care Ltd
Registered person address	73 Dudley Road DUDLEY West Midlands DY3 1TF

Responsible individual	Mahesh Mehan
Registered manager	Terence William Bull
Date of last inspection	17/03/2014

Inspection date	02/07/2014
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Previous inspection	inadequate progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is privately operated and provides care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/03/2014	Interim	inadequate progress
05/06/2013	Full	adequate

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

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 person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
29 (2001)	ensure a record of the receipt, disposal and administration of any medicine to any child is kept as a homes record as specified in Schedule 4. (Regulation 29(1))	08/08/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure the wishes, feelings and views of young people and those significant to them are taken into account in monitoring staff and developing the home (NMS1.7)
- ensure the DBS record shows the name of the person carrying out the check (NMS 16.4)

- ensure the provider's child protection procedures are submitted for consideration and comment to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and to the Local Authority Designated Officer. (NMS 20.4)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people are making good progress in relation to their starting points in all areas of their development. They have developed strong relationships with the manager and members of staff. As a result they are growing in confidence and developing a positive self-view. One young person stated, 'The home is a good place to live in and all staff are nice.' Another commented, 'I am happy at the home... I think the staff and other young people are good.'

Young people are having their needs well met within the home. They are in good health and regularly attend health appointments. They understand the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and take part in sporting activities such as playing football. Young people do not engage in risk taking behaviours such as the misuse of alcohol and drugs. As a consequence, young people are achieving positive outcomes with regard to their physical, emotional and psychological health. One family member stated, 'We are pleased with his progress and how he is being looked after.'

All young people are attending school or college and are making good progress in their education. Young people who have previously had very poor school attendance are now attending school full time with excellent levels of attendance. Young people over the age of 16 are working towards independence supported by staff. As a result they are developing independence skills appropriate to their age and abilities which will help prepare them for adulthood.

Young people's contact with their family is actively supported and promoted by staff. They transport and work with parents to ensure the time spent with the family is positive. As a consequence, young people are able to maintain positive links with their home, family and friends.

Young people are able to contribute to the day-to-day running of the home through planning meals and activities. They are able to personalise their bedrooms and have a say in the decoration of bedrooms and living areas. However, there is little formal consultation set up with the young people to gain their views over the development of the home.

Quality of care **good**

Staff interact positively and develop constructive relationships with the young people. As a result, young people feel secure and are aware that staff are concerned about their wellbeing and development. They know how to complain and are effectively supported in having their views heard. Staff promote and arrange advocacy for

young people if this is needed.

The impact of any new young person entering the home is carefully considered. The manager conducts impact assessments prior to any young person moving in. As a result, the interests of existing young people in the home are fully taken into account.

Young people receive a good level of personalised care from the manager and staff. This is because placement plans are individual to each young person. Staff ensure young people feel included in the decision making about their care as their views and feelings are actively sought. Behaviour management plans describe individualised strategies to manage the young people's behaviour. Staff work very closely with parents, schools and placing social workers to manage and develop positive behaviour. As a result, young people's negative behaviour has reduced. One head teacher stated, 'Communication between us and home is very good... We brief each other at the start and finish of every day.'

Staff ensure that the health needs of young people are positively addressed within the home. All medication is safely stored in individual locked cabinets for each young person with details of medication requirements clearly available for staff. This prevents any confusion in the administration of medication. All medication administered is recorded on the young people's files. However records are not kept as required by legislation.

Staff are proactive in ensuring all young people have delegated authority in place. As a result, staff can make the necessary decisions regarding health and basic care to ensure young people can experience normal day-to-day activities.

Staff actively support the young people's educational needs through close partnership working with other professionals. They have regular meetings with teachers to support the young people in school. The young people are also encouraged to take up college and work experience placements. One young person is helping out the company's maintenance men to gain work experience.

Staff identify and promote young people's cultural and religious needs. These are clearly identified in care planning and are positively addressed in daily living. There is a diversity of staff working at the home. They bring their knowledge and expertise of differing cultures and religions into the home. This helps young people to develop a positive awareness of other cultures.

The home is a large building which has been furnished to a high level. It is appropriately located and well maintained. Young people's photographs and art work are displayed around the home making the home feel homely and giving young people a sense of belonging. One visiting family commented, 'The standard of accommodation is very good and very clean.'

Keeping children and young people safe **good**

There is a good focus on safeguarding within the home. Young people say they feel safe and can talk to members of staff if they have any concerns. They are confident staff would listen and act appropriately. One young person stated, 'I know staff would sort anything out, if I was worried.' Young people interact well with each other and do not report any concerns regarding bullying.

Young people rarely go missing. Any missing behaviour is for short periods and staff act appropriately to minimise any risk. Risk assessments and placement plans highlight concerning behaviours and the factors that trigger these behaviours. This ensures that staff are aware and able to take the protective measures to safeguard the young people from risky situations. Staff promote positive behaviour whenever possible. When physical intervention is used, this is appropriately recorded and young people are able to share their views and concerns.

Staff receive safeguarding training from the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) to develop their knowledge and expertise in safeguarding. They work effectively with other agencies to promote the safety of young people in the home. Good links have been developed with the local police who visit the home fortnightly to talk to staff and young people. The home has developed a safeguarding procedure, although, this has not been submitted to LCSB or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for consideration and comment. This is required to ensure the policy is consistent with the procedures agreed by the LCSB.

The home is physically safe and secure. Fire equipment checks are completed appropriately and young people participate in regular fire drills to ensure they can evacuate the home in an emergency. The organisation has clear procedures for the recruitment of staff which prevents unsuitable people from being recruited. The DBS checks of new staff, however, do not state the name of the person carrying out the checks. This is an administrative shortfall and does not impact on young people living in the home.

Leadership and management **good**

This home is well managed. The Registered Manager has been in post since March 2014. He is qualified and has many years' experience. He has taken action to ensure the shortfalls found at the last inspection have been addressed. All requirements from the previous inspection have been met.

The home has a Statement of Purpose and young people's guide which accurately reflects the home and gives clear information for placing social workers, parents and young people. Development plans are in place. The manager monitors the activities of the home to ensure a continued good quality of care is maintained and he challenges placing authorities to ensure that the care planning arrangements are in

place.

The home has good staffing levels to meet the needs of the young people. There are no vacancies. Regular bank staff work at the home to cover any holidays and sickness. Staff are well supported through regular supervision and staff meetings. They are qualified and receive sufficient training to provide good quality care for young people. There is a strong commitment towards the professional development for staff. All staff either hold or are in the process of obtaining the level 3 Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma. The deputy manager and team leaders are undergoing level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care and children and Young People's Services. As a result, young people are receiving care and support from trained staff who are professionally up-to-date.

The manager and staff have developed positive relationships with other agencies. Placing social workers and families feel that communication from staff is very good. One Independent Reviewing Officer commented, 'There is a good tight team between school, social worker and staff at the home.'

Young people's records are clear. Development and progress are recorded and contribute to an understanding of the young person's life. Policies and procedures are in the process of being updated to reflect current changes to legislation.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information 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 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.