

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	24 September 2009
Inspector	Helen Walker
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	28 May 2009
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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 outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

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 provides care and accommodation for up to five young people of either gender, aged from eight years to 17 years old. The home is a detached property in a residential area in the town. It is close to schools, shops and leisure facilities. There are good public transport links to neighbouring towns and cities.

The home has individual bedrooms used by young people and two of these have en-suite bathroom facilities. A house bathroom is on the first floor. On the ground floor there is a lounge, a games room and dining kitchen. The staff and manager's offices are also on the ground floor. The two bedrooms used by staff who sleep-in are on the first and second floors. To the side and front of the house is a patio with an established garden area.

There are three young people living in this home. Two were present for part of the inspection process.

Summary

The purpose of this unannounced interim inspection was to follow up on actions and a recommendation made at the last inspection and to assess key standards under the outcome area of Staying Safe.

The home continues to provide a good level of care to young people. The actions and recommendation made at the last inspection are commented on in the improvement section of this report.

Young people are actively protected from harm and staff know how to respond in the event of any allegation or serious concern about a young person's safety. No complaints have been made by the young people since the last inspection and opportunities exist for them to discuss any matter they are unhappy with.

The home's environment is well-maintained and systems are in place to ensure appropriate health and safety checks are carried out

A recommendation has been made so that guidance is in place to inform staff and young people of when it may be necessary to search a young person's possessions.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection actions and a recommendation were made in relation to the recording of medication, the effectiveness of sanctions and to keep the interior of the home in good repair.

Suitable arrangements are now in place for the recording and safe administration of medicines which promotes the welfare of young people. The manager now ensures records show the effectiveness and consequences of the use of sanctions. Minor repairs have been carried out to the interior of the house which improves the home environment for the young people.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

To benefit the health needs of young people, staff receive training in relation to the safe storage, administration and disposal of medicines. Only prescribed medication is kept in the home and this is stored safely and securely. The manager monitors medication records to ensure these are in order and signed by staff. Staff are qualified to administer first aid treatment as needed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people's privacy and confidentiality is maintained in the home. For example, young people have individual bedrooms and access to a telephone that can be used without reference to staff. There are occasions when staff carry out searches of young people's bedrooms where failure to do this would put young people's welfare at risk. However, there is no guidance in place to inform staff and young people of when it may be necessary to search a young person's possessions.

The home has a complaints system in place and young people are made fully aware of this. No complaints have been made by the young people since the last inspection and opportunities exist for them to discuss any matter they are unhappy with. Staff have a good understanding about countering bullying and young people confirm they are happy living in the home.

Young people are actively protected from harm and staff know how to respond in the event of any allegation or serious concern about a young person's safety. Staff have training to assist them to care for and to promote the welfare of young people, for example, if concerns arise from sexual exploitation.

There are times when young people go missing from the home. However, consistent monitoring and appropriate liaison with child protection professionals assists staff to safeguard the young people and encourages them to return to the home.

Young people's acceptable behaviour is actively encouraged. Training in techniques to manage challenging behaviour helps staff to manage young people's behaviour positively, which is evident in that physical intervention has not been used and sanctions are few. Sanctions given for inappropriate behaviours are monitored by the manager to consider the effectiveness of the action taken.

Health and safety matters are managed well to ensure young people, staff and visitors are protected from potential hazards. The home environment is well-maintained with regular health and safety checks carried out.

Since the last inspection, no new staff have been employed at the home. Recruitment and employment procedures establish the suitability of staff to work with young people. Such systems protect the wellbeing of young people.

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 good.

Young people enjoy homely accommodation that is decorated and furnished to a very good standard. This means the home is a welcoming and well-maintained environment for young people. Any damage is made good so that the house remains in a good state of repair.

The home provides young people with facilities to support their privacy. This includes individual bedrooms and the availability of rooms in which to see visitors.

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 meets the Care Standards Act 2000, The Childrens Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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Recommendations

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

- provide guidance for staff and children on when it may be necessary to search a child's possessions (NMS 9.8).