

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC037521
Inspection date	26 January 2010
Inspector	Sue Winson
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	14 October 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

The home is run by a local authority as part of its service to children with disabilities and their families. It is a single storey building, which provides a respite care service for up to seven children between the ages of eight to 18 years old, with physical or learning disabilities.

The facilities include one lounge, a dining lounge area, a dining kitchen, sensory room, a bathroom, a walk-in shower, separate toilet, laundry and seven single bedrooms. The home has specialist lifting equipment and other aids and adaptations to support young people in their daily lives. There is a play area to the rear of the home, which is securely fenced to keep the children safe when at play. The home is easily accessible by car and public transport. There is parking for staff and visitors to the home.

Summary

This unannounced random inspection took place over one day. All key standards under the staying safe outcome area were addressed. In addition standards relating to actions and recommendations made at the last inspection were included under positive contribution, economic wellbeing and organisation outcome areas.

This is a satisfactory home where the manager and staff are committed to improving outcomes for young people. The main responsibility for the young people's care lies with their parents or full time carers and staff work with them, and other professionals, to the benefit of the young people. High levels of support and supervision ensure that young people are safe. There is a skilled and stable staff group who know the young people well and work together to provide consistency. Not all records are fully completed nor do they fully reflect the progress young people are making.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The manager and staff have worked on the four actions made at the last inspection. Effective systems are in place to ensure that placement plans are updated to reflect changes, staff supervision and training has improved and monitoring visits under Regulation 33 are taking place each month. Training on recording is to take place in the near future to address issues with incomplete sanction records.

Two of the four recommendations made at the last inspection have been fully completed. Staff personnel files contain full information and staff meetings are taking place each month. The manager has plans in place to ensure that young people's needs, development and progress are fully recorded but these have not yet been fully implemented. There has been limited time since the last inspection for the actions and recommendations to be acted upon. Due to the imminent closure of the home for major refurbishment, this inspection was brought forward.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people's privacy is respected and they are assisted with personal care in a manner which preserves their dignity. Confidential information is safely stored and parents give signed consent to the sharing of information to meet the needs of their children.

Young people are protected by the home's policies and practices in respect of safeguarding, bullying, complaints and missing from home. Full records of significant incidents are maintained and the information is communicated to parents, carers and social workers. Young people know how to complain and are supported to express their views and opinions. There have been no complaints, incidents of bullying, missing from home or child protection issues since the last inspection. High levels of supervision safeguard the young people in the home and whilst out in the community.

Positive behaviour management is evident, informed by comprehensive planning. The staff team reflect on practice and meetings are held to discuss individual young people's behaviour when necessary. Staff visit schools and meet with teachers to ensure consistency of approach. Records of sanctions demonstrate these are rarely used and are reasonable. Records of physical intervention do not include enough details to meet the regulations. There is evidence of the manager monitoring behaviour management and commenting on effectiveness of strategies.

The home provides physical safety and security and all necessary checks take place within the required timescales. All the young people have an individual plan which outlines how they will be supported to leave the building during fire drills. A wide range of risk assessments are in place which include strategies to minimise or reduce risks and these serve to protect the young people.

Systems for the recruitment and vetting of staff are appropriate. The manager now verifies the reason for people leaving employment with children or vulnerable adults. Arrangements are in place for all staff to have criminal record bureau checks updated every three years.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people have placement plans which outline their needs and specify how they will be met. These are now being reviewed and updated when there are significant changes. The staff have been active in ensuring that they have full written information from placing social workers, schools and other professionals to inform the placement planning. Parents and full time carers are consulted and sign the plans. Where young people are assessed as needing specialist services the home ensures these are accessed. Statutory reviews and planning meetings are held to discuss progress and plans.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is satisfactory.

The home is large and has sufficient space to accommodate young people who use wheelchairs. Specialist equipment is available to meet the needs of the group of young people who use the short break service. All areas of the home are fully accessible. The home is in need of considerable refurbishment and redecoration and a three year programme is in place to improve facilities and raise standards. Major building work is to start in the near future.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The home has sufficient staff, many of whom have worked in the home for some time. They work flexibly and are committed to meeting the needs of the young people. Staff supervision and team meetings are now happening more frequently. Outstanding training needs have either been addressed or courses are planned in the near future.

Monitoring visits are taking place monthly and comprehensive reports are written which include action planning to remedy any deficiencies or concerns. The visitor is also able to monitor progress on the actions.

Recording on young people's files has improved but does not yet fully reflect their progress. For example, more individual work is carried out than is recorded.

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
22	maintain an accurate and up to date record of measures of control used, as set out in Regulation 17.	14 January 2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure that children's needs, development and progress are recorded. (NMS 35)