

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	2 March 2010
Inspector	David Morgan
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	7 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 registered to accommodate up to eight children and young people aged between 12 and 18 years of age. The home is an adapted, Victorian property operated by a private company. It provides care for up to twelve months to children or young people with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. Care includes education on site and regular camps. There are eight children and young people resident at present, one contributed directly to this inspection, and other contributed indirectly. Because of the regular trips that are attended by all children and young people, there are usually no more than six at home at any one time.

The home is situated in an area of outstanding natural beauty, but is also close to leisure facilities and shops. There are good bus and train routes to local towns and cities. The building is set in its own grounds with gardens and established trees at the front and back and car parking. The office and lounge are on the ground floor as well as the dining room, kitchen and games room. Children and young people have individual bedrooms.

Summary

This unannounced interim inspection finds that a high standard of care is being maintained with effective leadership resulting in strong practice in a variety of areas. The focus of this inspection is on the previous recommendations and safety issues only. The recommendations from last time have been addressed overall although staff qualification levels remain lower than necessary and is carried forward in this report. This inspection makes one action only to ensure that fire drills are more realistic in order to train staff sufficiently.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Last time no actions and three recommendations were made. Paperwork now shows more clearly where young people's placement plans and risk assessments overlap and what is done to address these issues on a daily basis. This is an important contribution to positive outcomes for young people. Qualification levels, however, remain below the required minimum although training is ongoing and a high priority.

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.

Children and young people's privacy is respected well and their information is confidentially stored and handled. Children and young people know how to make complaints although they feel they are usually treated fairly; an effective system is in place. More general welfare issues are also well managed with effective liaison with other agencies. Staff are well organised and are effective in managing the children and young people so that the instances of bullying and being absent without authority are minimised.

Individual behavioural issues are extremely well managed. Individual issues and triggers are identified and acted upon. Children and young people respect the approach taken by staff and consider it to be fairly applied. Measures are proportionate and well monitored.

Children and young people enjoy high levels of physical safety and security. Fire safety measures are addressed routinely and thoroughly. From time to time, children and young people are included in fire training events, which is excellent practice. However, drills do not take into account the variety of possible scenarios that emergencies create. This means that such training is less effective than possible. The good level of staff recruitment practice helps to ensure safety levels in this area too.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

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
26	ensure by means of drills and practices at suitable intervals that the persons working at the home, and so far as practicable, the children living there, are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire, with regard to using various scenarios. (Regulation 32(1)(e))	5 April 2010

Recommendations

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

- ensure that a minimum ratio of 80% of all care staff have completed their Level 3 Caring for Children and Young People National Vocational Qualification. (NMS 29.5)