

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	1 February 2010
Inspector	Stella Henderson
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 provides therapeutic care, accommodation with education and outdoor activities for up to eight young people aged 10 to 17 years old. The home is situated in a rural location but within easy reach of essential services and amenities. There is also easy access to major towns and cities.

Summary

The purpose of this visit was to undertake an interim unannounced inspection. Two outcomes were inspected on this occasion; staying safe and organisation.

The home continues to provide a satisfactory overall standard of care. Young people are generally safeguarded and their welfare promoted. There are sound systems in place to deal with any episodes of absconding, bullying or child protection issues. Staff are skilled and experienced in working in a therapeutic environment that promotes favourable outcomes for young people.

Although some improvements in practice were evident at this inspection, new requirements are raised in respect of procedural and recording shortfalls. The Registered Manager took steps to address these deficits at the time of the inspection.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the registered provider was required to improve practice with regard to the administration of medication and monitoring under Regulation 34. These have now been met, but an action raised to address the recording of restraints in a bound page numbered book is still outstanding.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people live in a home that continues to provide them with satisfactory standards of safeguarding. Levels of supervision are effective in promoting young people's welfare and means that bullying is not an issue at the home.

Additional safeguarding measures are in place to deal with any episodes of missing from home and challenging behaviour. Young people benefit from having very clear management plans and helpful interventions from staff to help shape positive behaviour. A complaints procedure is in place, however, the majority of concerns are resolved at an informal level.

Young people's well-being is promoted through comprehensive risk assessments on known or likely behaviours. Environmental checks are also in place to ensure young people are not at risk from hazards within the home. Personal information is stored securely within the home and bathroom arrangements are such that young people's privacy and dignity are maintained.

Staff are conversant with child protection procedures and records show that these procedures have been promptly implemented when required. The home has not notified Ofsted of such incidents, which although procedural and having no direct impact on young people, undermines otherwise good safeguarding practices.

Physical restraint is rarely necessary and where this occurs staff are recording the incident, including detailed life space interviews. The recording is still not compliant with the regulations, however, and a requirement is raised for the second time.

Personnel records were not inspected in this occasion as the last full inspection demonstrated that the provider has a robust procedure in place to ensure that only those who are suitable to work with children are employed at the home.

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 not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The home continues to be generally well managed. Young people benefit because the staff team is well-established, experienced and skilled. Staff take advantage of a range of training opportunities to support them in their work and receive regular supervision. Staffing levels are very good and meet the needs of young people.

Practice has improved with regard to the monitoring of the home's activities under Regulation 34, but the quality of this auditing is inconsistent. Some reporting under this regulation reflects a 'tick box' exercise whilst others are more comprehensive. The latter provides a more accurate overview of the performance of the home and is used as a more effective tool to improve the quality of care at the home and, therefore, outcomes for young people.

There are gaps in the frequency of Regulation 33 visits. This means there is currently no independent oversight of the functioning of the home and the safeguarding of young people.

All documentation relating to young people is in good order including that relating to medication, which is now accurately recorded. Comprehensive case records assist young people to understand the kind of support they will receive, and provide an accurate record of their progress and development at the home.

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
20	inform without delay any of the events listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 5 (Regulation 30 (1))	2 March 2010
22	provide a written record, made in a volume kept for that purpose, the details of any physical restraint including points (a) to (g) of this regulation (Regulation 17)(4)	2 March 2010
32	undertake to visit the home at least once a month. (Regulation 33 (3))	2 March 2010

Recommendations

There are no recommendations.