

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	14 August 2009
Inspector	Muhammed Harunur Rashid
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	16 March 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 children's home is a purpose built complex run by a registered charity in partnership with a local authority. The home provides short stay services to children and young people who have high support needs between the ages of five and under 18-years-old. The home is split into two units and provides services for up to 12 children and young people. The home is situated in an urban area, within easy access of local transport links and health and leisure facilities. As a respite unit, different numbers of children and young people stay at the home on different days.

Summary

At this unannounced full inspection all the key National Minimum Standards were inspected.

This is a good service with one outstanding outcome. Children and young people's complex health care needs are well met. They receive individualised support. Children and young people live in a safe environment. They have opportunities to participate in a range of leisure activities. Staff promote equality and diversity in the service delivery. The Registered Manager has a commitment to promote the welfare of children and young people and focus on improvement. However, a minimum ratio of 80% of all care staff have not completed their National Vocational Qualifications Level 3 training in child care. Staff do not always complete monthly reports on each child or young person.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were no actions or recommendations made at the last inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children and young people enjoy healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs. Staff are fully aware of the dietary needs of children and young people. They provide culturally appropriate food. Halal and vegetarian meals are provided for children and young people who need these. Staff have knowledge of disabled children and young people's difficulties with eating and work closely with health professionals for advice and support. Staff are provided with specialist training for the safe administration of gastrostomy feeding to disabled children and young people who require this.

Children and young people's complex health care needs are well met. Children and young people's health care needs are well identified and individual health care plans are in place. The home works in partnership with the local authority and closely works with the local health services which enable children and young people to get access to their services. This also offers opportunities for staff to get access to various training to develop their knowledge and skills in order to meet children and young people's complex health care needs. Staff accompany children and young people to medical appointments and maintain good records of all appointments they have attended during their short stay at the home.

The home has an appropriate medication administration policy and staff adhere to this. Staff are provided with medication administration training. Staff keep records of medication administered to children and young people. Medications are stored safely in locked cupboards. First aid boxes are provided in the home. Staff have attended first aid training.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children and young people's privacy and confidentiality are promoted by the policy in place, the practice of staff and through the secure storage of young people's records. Children and young people are provided with single bedroom accommodation and a sufficient number of bathrooms and toilets are available. Staff are sensitive to gender issues when dealing with children and young people of the opposite sex.

An appropriate complaints policy and procedure is in place and the procedure is made accessible by being displayed in the premises. Staff maintain a complaint log book. Complaints are appropriately recorded and managed according to the home's procedures.

A comprehensive child protection policy and procedure is in place which provides guidance for staff to protect children and young people. Staff have attended child protection training and have awareness of child protection issues. The home has an anti-bullying policy and staff have sound knowledge and skills to deal with this if bullying is suspected.

It is unlikely that a child or young person will go missing from care due to the high levels of supervision in place. However, the home has a policy and procedure in place for dealing with unauthorised absence from care.

Staff are well supported and encouraged through the provision of appropriate training, such as managing challenging behaviour. Staff have sound knowledge of safeguarding issues and training in the use of restraint.

Staff take appropriate steps to keep children, young people, visitors and themselves safe from the risk of fire and other hazards. A risk assessment of the premises is in place, regular fire alarm testing and fire drills are undertaken and a current gas test certificate is evident.

Staff are recruited in accordance with the policy of the organisation. The Human Resources department ensures that all necessary documents including enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure certificates are obtained prior to the appointment of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

There is a strategy in place to ensure that a key worker is assigned for each child or young person. The children and young people are supported in line with their needs and wishes. Children and young people can approach any members of staff and they are listened to. Staff develop an individual risk assessment for each child or young person and a strategy is in place to eliminate or reduce the identified risk factors. There is a system in place to develop a monthly progress report on each child or young person. However, the home's monthly reports on each child or young person are not always completed by staff.

Children and young people attend schools. Staff support children and young people to attend schools during their stay at the respite service. Schools arrange transport for children and young people to travel to and from schools. Staff support children and young people with homework and developing numeracy and literacy skills. Children and young people have opportunities to use computers for educational and recreational purposes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young people benefit from the placement plans which set out the assessed needs and objectives of the placements. These also stated how assessed needs would be met on a day to day basis. Children and young people are encouraged to get involved in their review process. Evidence shows that statutory reviews take place on time. Children and young people and their family member attend review meetings and contribute.

Staff welcome parents to visit their children at the home. Key workers liaise with carers, parents and professionals involved and pass significant information to them where appropriate. There are appropriate procedures in place for introducing children and young people to the home.

Interaction between staff, children and young people was seen to be warm and relationships formed were valued. Staff consult with children and young people. Staff take into account the religious, racial, cultural and linguistic backgrounds of children and families. Evidence shows that they and their family members are also consulted regularly to improve the service delivery. Information regarding access to advocacy services is provided.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Staff encourage and support children and young people to develop independent living skills, for example, looking after their personal spaces. Staff also support children and young people with buying various items for themselves. Children and young people have opportunities to participate in a range of activities.

The home's location, design and size are in keeping with its purpose and function. The home serves the needs of the children and young people it accommodates. The premises are completely wheelchair accessible and have specialist facilities for disabled children and young people. For example, there is a suitable bath and electronic hoist, a changing bed and a shower trolley in place. There is a soft playroom and a sensory room available for children and young people. The premises are well decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The home has developed a Statement of Purpose. This included all the required information, such as the aims and objectives of the service. The Children's Guide provides information regarding the facilities available to them. There are systems in place to monitor the performance of the home against the Statement of Purpose.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Evidence supports a consistent commitment to improving equality and diversity in practice. Children and young people receive an individualised service in the home which is designed to meet their personal needs.

Appropriate staffing arrangements are in place to meet children and young people's assessed needs. The Registered Manager reviews staffing levels in accordance with the needs of children and young people. She informed the inspector that the service has recently recruited nine members of staff. The Registered Manager is available for both staff, children and young people for support and advice.

All staff receive regular supervision and annual appraisals from their line manager. Weekly staff meetings are held and staff have opportunities to contribute to the meetings. The home works in partnership with the local authority and closely works with the local health services. Children and young people have access to these services. Staff receive various training from health professionals which enables them to develop knowledge and skills to meet the complex needs of the children and young people. The staff team is supported by ancillary staff. Staff attend various in-house and external training to promote their professional development.

Each child or young person has an individual and secured record of their history and progress. Children and young people's files examined contained all information necessary as detailed in Schedule 3 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2001.

However, a minimum ratio of 80% of all care staff have not completed their National Vocational Qualification Level 3 training in child care.

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 Children's 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):

- ensure that a minimum ratio of 80% of all care staff complete their NVQ Level 3 training in child care (NMS 29)
- ensure that monthly reports on each child or young person are completed by staff (NMS 7)