Inspection report for children's home

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<th><strong>Unique reference number</strong></th>
<th>SC031490</th>
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<td><strong>Inspection date</strong></td>
<td>27 January 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Inspector</strong></td>
<td>Gwen Buckley</td>
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<td><strong>Type of Inspection</strong></td>
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| **Date of last inspection** | 4 June 2009 |
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 secure unit is managed by a County Council. It provides secure accommodation to five young people aged from 10 to 17 years old. All the young people accommodated are placed under Section 25 of the Children Act 1989. Those under 13 years must have the approval of the Secretary of State to be accommodated prior to admission.

The three young people present at the time of the inspection assisted by providing their views on the care they receive and what it is like to live at the home.

The home has a secured external hard-surfaced recreation play area and a small garden area used for on-site mobility. It also has a secure car port and courtyard area for leisure and education use with hard and soft play areas alongside. An internal fitness room is available and the living areas comprise an open plan living, dining and kitchen area. Education is provided on site.

Summary

This was an unannounced inspection. This inspection focused on the developments made against the recommendations made following the last inspection. The staying safe outcome was inspected, with the exception of staff vetting and recruitment checks, as completed files are not located in the home. The remaining outcome groups were not inspected and only reflect the progress made in relation to any recommendations previously made.

As there was nothing in this inspection that would indicate that the service delivery or provision had deteriorated, the overall judgement ratings are carried forward from the previous license approval inspection findings. No recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection.

Young people spoke very well of the care received and could not think of how it could be improved. The number of restraints used in the home is minimal, with only six restraints since the last inspection which covers a seven month period. Young people can present very challenging behaviour, which staff manage well while retaining a positive and supportive environment for the young people.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Seven recommendations were made at the last inspection; three of the recommendations related to the education provision and will be followed up at the next approval inspection. Three of the remaining four recommendations have been met. Although the fourth recommendation has not been put into practice, sufficient progress has been made.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

At the last inspection the need to ensure effective systems are in place to identify the needs of individuals, at the time of admission and leaving the home was raised. This specifically related to the need to ensuring the home has effective processes established to remind placing
authorities of the need to provide all the information required, and of the rights of the young person to receive services from their placing authority. To progress this standard letters have been developed to send to placing authorities; responses are first sought from social workers, then their line managers and finally a letter is sent, to director of children’s services if needed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Good systems are in place to ensure children’s records are securely stored. Preserving privacy and dignity is difficult to achieve within a secure setting as young people are constantly being observed and there are no en-suite bedrooms. Practice observed throughout the inspection showed respect for young people’s privacy and dignity. The home is currently planning a complete new build. Funding agreement has been obtained from the Department for Children Schools and Families and the new building will have en-suite bedrooms, enhancing the privacy and dignity of the young people.

The home has very good processes in place to ensure young people have access to adults who will advocate on their behalf. Young people stated they know how to complain, but do not feel they need to use the complaints system. They are confident their key workers and other staff will listen to them and address any issues they have. Since the last inspection the home has received compliments regarding the care provided from young people themselves and their family members.

Good systems are in place to keep young people safe. Safeguarding and promoting children’s rights and welfare is to the fore in the staff thinking. Staff are vigilant about bullying and the need to keep young people safe. At the time of the inspection, due to very challenging behaviour being displayed, staffing numbers were increased to ensure all the young people and staff are kept safe. This enables the young people to continue to attend their planned activities and reduces the negative impact which inappropriate behaviour can have on group living.

Young people are assessed for risk of self-harm or suicide and when needed specific plans put in place to keep them safe. External professionals support staff to care for young people; they review each young person’s progress and care planning with the staff on a weekly basis.

Good systems are in place to report any unauthorised absence from the home. Records are kept of any unauthorised absence and other notifications which are all monitored by the external regulation 33 visitor. There has been one incident of a young person absconding on mobility since the last inspection.

The incentive scheme is reported by young people new to the home, to be easy to understand. Staff were seen to maintain boundaries in a firm but friendly manner. Young people on restricted movements in the home, due to extremely negative behaviour, feel staff have treated them fairly and have no complaints to make.

There is a very low level of restraint and sanctions despite some young people who present very challenging behaviour. There is an outstanding level of detailed recording noted for single separation, sanctions and use of restraints. Systems are in place for monitoring the use of single separation, restraint and sanctions which enable management to look at trends and patterns and develop practice.
Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do
The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution
The provision is good.

Following the last inspection the unit was asked to review the procedures for undertaking assessments of young people’s needs and to ensure an integrated process which includes a detailed mental health screening was implemented. This has been progressed by implementing a new initial assessment undertaken in the first week of admission. This is a child-friendly process that the key worker and individual young person goes through together. This is then used to inform the care planning. In conjunction with the relevant health professionals a number of different mental health screening tools have been tried and one identified for use. This system is now on order; after it has been delivered it will be used for all young people new to the home.

Achieving economic wellbeing
The provision is not judged.

Organisation
The organisation is outstanding.

At the last inspection the home was asked to review the monitoring and quality assurance procedures to ensure that they are supported by clear and accessible management information. This has been addressed and data is available in a format that enables the managers to see trends and patterns that they can use to inform practice.

The manager was also asked to review recording systems to ensure each child has a permanent private and secure record of their history and progress. This has been addressed by ensuring the daily log does not contain private information and all the care planning information and updates are held within the young person’s own file.

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.

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Recommendations
There are no recommendations.