

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC007284
Inspection date	24 November 2009
Inspector	Joanna Heller
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	28 July 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 accommodates six young people of either sex aged between 12 years and 18 years old. The home offers 24 hour care for young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities on the autistic spectrum.

The home is situated in a residential area on the outskirts of a large city. The home has easy access to all local amenities including high street markets and good transport links. The home offers single bedroom accommodation with sufficient numbers of toilet and bathroom facilities for the young people.

Summary

This was an unannounced interim inspection carried out as part of the annual inspection program. All key standards in staying safe were reviewed as well as a selection of standards in enjoying and achieving and organisation.

The home continues to be a 'beacon' provider which excels at consulting and engaging with young people enabling them to take control over their lives and achieve positive outcomes.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the home was assessed as outstanding, however, was asked to evidence staff induction processes in more detail. The home has undertaken a review and further developed evidence of staff induction processes.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The home has excellent systems and relationships in place which help to make young people feel safe, valued and well cared for. This is demonstrated by the following comments from a young person who has lived at the home for two years ' this home really helps me because I get the support I need. The staff are fantastic and everyone here is my family, I will miss it when I leave here and I don't want to. My room is beautiful and it helps me because I am 17 years old and I have my space. Bullying will not be tolerated here. Complaints are well dealt with and fairly. This home is very safe and they make it as comfortable as they can, like parents would do. Without the owners and staff I would be incomplete.'

The building is well maintained and systems are in place to maintain the safety of the building. Periodic checks are undertaken to ensure gas and electrical supplies are safe. The home stores food and hazardous chemicals appropriately. Fire precautionary arrangements in the home ensure young people and staff are safeguarded from fire in line with current good practice.

Sufficient bathrooms and toilets are provided to maintain the privacy of young people. All bathrooms and bedrooms are lockable to provide privacy for young people. The home ensures information about young people remains confidential.

Good systems of behaviour management are in place which are supported by positive relationships with staff. The home has clear house rules which young people feel are clear and fair. When young people breach the rules sanctions are applied. Sanctions generally relate to the loss of activities and reparation for damages. Young people feel that sanctions are fairly applied and are relevant to the behaviour. Staff take the time in one to one sessions to discuss with young people their behaviour and its impact on others. Staff are trained in restraint techniques, however, no restraints have taken place. Any sanctions applied are clearly recorded. The home operates a positive approach of rewarding good behaviour and each young person has a clear goals.

Staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding vulnerable young people. All staff receive training in safeguarding which is updated annually. The concept of safeguarding is explored with new staff during induction and staff attend the first available safeguarding training.

Risk assessments are in place for young people which identify their vulnerability and any risks they may pose to others. Activity based risk assessments are also in place. Young people who go missing are notified to the appropriate agencies in line with local guidelines.

Young people have confidence in the home complaints procedures. The home actively supports young people in engaging with children's rights officers where they have concerns over support levels from the placing authority.

Young people are safeguarded from unsuitable people gaining employment in the home through robust vetting practices. The home ensures that checks on peoples identity, criminal and employment history are undertaken prior to the commencement of employment. Written references are sought from their current and most recent employer and these references are followed up with a telephone call to ensure their validity. Any gaps in employment are explored.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Staff demonstrate deep commitment to the welfare and individual needs of each of the young people and develop genuine relationships with them. Young people feel well cared for and valued. Staff provide positive cultural role models for young people. All of the young people's individual needs are explored and developed into an individual care plan which is kept under regular review. Any individual needs resulting from culture and religion are explored to the full with young people being supported in making informed choice. Young people are provided with any support and equipment they need.

Young people's comments include 'The staff and owners really encourage me to go college and when they ask me how I have done at college today it motivates me. The owners and staff support me. There are Asian people here who are from the same religion which helps me. Staff 'A' understands me because she is like a mum and no matter how many arguments I have with her, she is all ways there for me.'

The home demonstrates a deep commitment to education and positively promotes this as young people's best chance to secure a better future for themselves. Young people and placing authorities believe this to be a key strength of the unit. Reward systems linked to education are in place. Staff support young people in securing appropriate educational placements and ensuring regular attendance. The home has successfully turned this around enabling young people to gain recognition for their achievements such as awards for most significantly improved student.

Young people are able to enjoy a variety of leisure opportunities and pursue individual interests. Young people benefit from one to one activity time each week with their keyworker to participate in an activity of their choice. Two midweek breaks have been enjoyed by the young people earlier in the year.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is not judged.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The home is well managed and has good systems in place to monitor quality of care. The home has reviewed and improved the methods for recording and evidencing staff induction processes. Staff are well supported, competent and professional. Staff demonstrate deep commitment to working with the young people.

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
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Recommendations

There are no recommendations.