

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC064412
Inspection date	21 January 2010
Inspector	John Chivers
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	21 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 provides accommodation for six children and young people with learning disabilities between the ages of eight years and 18 years. The home is a domestic sized house that has been converted for its purpose. The registered provider is also the manager. The home is situated within walking distance of the town centre and has easy access to public transport. The home has the necessary equipment to support young people with a physical disability. There are six large single rooms, a lounge/dining room, a sensory room and a kitchen. The home provides a Statement of Purpose and a Children's Guide with information about the facilities and services provided. Prospective children and their representatives are welcome to view the premises and discuss their needs with the manager. There is a fee range which depends on individual children's needs. The home provides a caring and supportive service.

Summary

The inspection was an 'interim' inspection and unannounced. All of the national minimum standards for children's homes in the section 'staying safe' were assessed. The sections being healthy, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution, economic wellbeing and organisation were not inspected on this occasion. The two actions set at the last inspection were found to have been met in full and no actions or recommendations are made as a result of this inspection. The home is well managed and affords a good standard of care and support to the resident children, having clear regard for equality and diversity issues throughout its operation.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the registered manager was asked to draw up a policy regarding children's allowances and to formalise the staff appraisal system. A policy has now been drawn up which gives clear information on what allowances are available to the children. A new staff appraisal format has been introduced and will be implemented later in the year. This will allow for greater detail to be covered in the staff appraisal process.

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.

Staff treat children with dignity and respect their privacy and attend to their intimate and personal care needs in a caring and sensitive manner. The home has a policy and procedure regarding privacy and confidentiality of which all staff are aware. Staff are aware of the importance of confidentiality and this topic is covered as part of the staff induction programme. Confidential records are kept secure in locked cabinets and drawers within a locked office. Children have access to a telephone without reference to staff and their toilet and bathing facilities have specialist equipment and afford good privacy.

The home takes complaints seriously and allows children and parents unrestricted access to the home's complaints procedures, which includes a simplified pictorial version for the children

located in the Children's Guide. Staff receive training in the area of complaints at induction and this is reinforced periodically at team meetings. The home's complaint book is available and shows that no complaints have been received by the home since the last inspection. Ofsted have received no complaints or concerns about the service and children appear settled and happy at the home.

Staff have full regard for the protection of children and are committed to their welfare. Supervision of children is close and staff are aware and alert to any safeguarding issues. The home has a detailed child protection policy and procedure and staff also have access to the county council multi agency safeguarding procedures. All staff are trained in child protection and safeguarding and such training is updated annually. The home's manager said there are no current or ongoing child protection or safeguarding issues at the home.

The close supervision arrangements and the caring and supportive service provided helps reduce the likelihood of bullying occurring and bullying is not perceived as an issue in the home. The home has a policy and procedure regarding anti-bullying and staff are quick to intervene should any such behaviour occur. There is a policy and procedure regarding missing persons, though no unauthorised absences have occurred in the home.

Children's behaviour is well managed and no significant issues regarding discipline or behaviour management are evident. Staff have good working relationships with children and interact with them and engage them appropriately. There is a detailed behaviour management policy which includes the use of physical intervention and restraint. The home follows a recognised system of behaviour management and staff attend training in this area. Due to the nature of the children's disabilities sanctions are not used by the home and any misconduct is dealt with by verbal reassurance, distraction and disapproval. The home's restraint book shows that only one incident of restraint has occurred since the last inspection. Recording is clear and the restraint used appears necessary and appropriate in the circumstances described in the records. Children have behaviour management plans of which parents contribute to and sign their agreement.

The home takes active steps to keep children, staff and visitors safe from the inherent risks of fire and other potential safety hazards and enables them to live in a safe and clean environment. The home has a health and safety policy and procedure and the employers health and safety 'law' poster is prominently displayed. Monthly health and safety audits occur and reports on audits are held. The home has a written fire risk assessment and fire evacuation drills and fire alarm tests occur on a regular basis. Staff are trained in fire awareness. There are current utility safety test certificates available and a range of generic risk assessments are held which are monitored and reviewed regularly. Standards of cleanliness and hygiene are good throughout the home and no safety hazards are evident in the areas of the premises accessed.

The home's recruitment and vetting procedures helps to ensure that only suitable staff are appointed to look after the children and that the staff team have a good balance in terms of gender and ethnicity which further enhances the equality and diversity provision of the service. The home has a staff recruitment, equal opportunities and equality and diversity policy. Staff recruitment and vetting procedures are sound and staff files hold all required information including two written references and checks via the Criminal Records Bureau at enhanced level. No new staff have been appointed since the last inspection and therefore staff files were not revisited on this occasion.

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 not judged.

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.