

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC355902
Inspection date	11 February 2010
Inspector	Kevin Whatley
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	14 August 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 setting offers care and accommodation for up to five children and young people aged from 11 years who display emotional and behavioural difficulties. Children and young people are normally placed at the home for medium- to long-term periods, though emergency and short-term placements are also provided.

The home offers accommodation over two floors with considerable space both inside and outside of the building. The home is situated outside of a town centre though there are local amenities and good transport links.

Summary

This interim inspection took place on a weekday and was unannounced. On this occasion standards within the outcome areas being healthy and all the key standards found within staying safe were assessed. Three recommendations were made as a result of the last inspection, two of these were found to have been addressed while one other could not be assessed fully on the day. Two recommendations were made at this inspection. The storage and administration of medication is generally sound, though stock control procedures could be more robust. An appropriate and responsive approach toward child protection ensures young people are kept as safe as possible. Young people have their particularly difficult, challenging or risky behaviours met in a focused and individualised fashion.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Three recommendations were made at the last inspection. One of these concerned the need that whenever controlled medicines are given that two members of staff sign the administration log. A review of the medication administration system confirmed that controlled medicines now have two staff signatures when they are given.

The second recommendation related to ensuring young people are involved when fire drills are undertaken. The fire safety test record confirmed that all fire drills now include young people.

The final recommendation noted the need to have photographic identification held on staff files to confirm their identities. All staff files are now kept at the organisation head offices, therefore, it was not possible to view them on the day; an offer was made to have these faxed over to the home, however, due to adverse weather conditions it was safer for staff not to travel to facilitate this.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The storage and administration of medication is generally appropriate and safe. All medicines are stored in a locked cupboard within the main office. Young people who are subject to controlled medicines have these given to them safely with two members of staff signing to confirm the process. Very few homely remedies are stored at the setting. Records of medicines

accepted into the home are well kept, however, a recent prescription for one young person was recorded as coming into the home but did not state the actual number of tablets.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people have their privacy respected with staff knocking on their rooms before entering. An appropriate room search policy and procedure is in place with any actions taken clearly in line with the policy and solely for the health and well-being of each young person. All confidential information regarding young people is stored appropriately.

The setting has a well-defined complaints procedure, which young people are made aware of in their guide. Information as to how to make a complaint is displayed around the home, as are the contact details for advocacy services, such as the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and Childline. No complaints have been made by young people since the last inspection and none have been received by Ofsted.

As far as possible young people are protected from the risk of harm. Comprehensive policies and procedures address all key areas of child protection. Staff receive regular child safeguarding training and attend refresher courses as part of the rolling training programme. Staff display a keen understanding of child protection matters with any issues or concerns being responded to swiftly.

The challenging or risky behaviours of all young people are properly risk assessed. Young people's behaviours including violence, absconding or bullying behaviours are outlined in individual behaviour management plans, which provide a clear and obvious guide for staff to follow. All staff are suitably trained in the use of physical intervention with any incidents being thoroughly reviewed and considered. The use of restraints is minimal with an emphasis on de-escalation and communication with young people as a key aspect of staff practice.

The setting have suitable policies and procedures to address matters when young people leave the home without permission. Swift actions are taken by staff when young people leave without permission with good liaison with the local police. The level of such behaviour is very low.

The levels of staff supervision reduces the risk of bullying behaviours taking place unchallenged. When issues of bullying become apparent decisive intervention strategies are used by staff, which includes open dialogue and discussion in house meetings. Those young people who display bullying behaviours are given support and guidance to address the reasons behind their behaviour, while being suitably sanctioned. The use of sanctions is appropriate with very clear records and monitoring procedures in place to keep them under review.

The health and safety of all those who live and work at the home is addressed appropriately. The routine checking, testing and servicing of fire fighting and electrical equipment takes place at regular intervals. Fire alarm drills are carried out regularly with all young people and staff taking part.

The recruitment of staff is robust with all necessary checks being completed prior to staff working with young people. Staff records are now held centrally at the organisation's offices, unfortunately due to adverse weather conditions it was not possible to review these.

Confirmations of Criminal Records Bureau checks were seen of all staff; staff do not currently have their own photographic identification badges.

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

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure all medication is accurately stock-checked and recorded, notably the number or amount of medicines accepted into the home (NMS 13.10)
- ensure all staff recruitment files contain picture identification and that staff themselves have personal identification badges provided to them. (NMS 27.1)