

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	3 August 2010
Inspector	John Chivers
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	15 December 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 resource centre for children with disabilities and their families, which is owned and managed by the local district council. One of the services offered at the centre is residential respite care for children with a disability. It is this aspect of the centre's activity that is regulated under the Children's Homes Regulations 2001. The centre is registered for five young people between eight and 17 years who have a learning and/or physical disability; many of the children also present challenging behaviour. Other services offered include day care, after school care and outreach services.

The home is a two storey detached house. It has its own minibus to enable good transport links with neighbouring towns and local facilities. There are five bedrooms on the first floor and several communal areas including a lounge, dining area, sensory room and large garden to the rear of the property. There is a lift to provide access to the ground and first floor. All local amenities are within easy reach of the home. The home has a guide for parents and also its own children's guide. In addition, a DVD that enables the young people to see all the facilities the centre provides has been developed. The home welcomes prospective service users and/or their representatives to view the premises and discuss their needs with the manager.

Summary

The inspection was a full inspection and unannounced. All of the key standards in the sections being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution, economic well-being and organisation of the National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes 2002 were assessed at this inspection. There were no actions or recommendations set at the last inspection and no actions or recommendations are made as a result of this inspection. The home is managed to a high professional standard and affords an equally high standard of care and support to the resident children, having full regard for equality and diversity issues throughout all areas of its operation.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were no actions or recommendations made as a result of the last inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from a healthy, balanced and nutritious diet, and any special religious, cultural, medical or preferential diets are catered for as required. The kitchen area is modern and well equipped and provisions are safely and correctly stored with refrigerator, and freezer temperatures taken and recorded. All staff are trained in food hygiene.

Children are encouraged to live healthy and active lifestyles while in respite care at the home and participate in a range of activities and exercise which assists with their physical development and co-ordination. Children have comprehensive health care plans of which staff are aware and monitor and review on a regular basis. Children's health is risk assessed and a general practitioner is available to the home. Signed parental consent is held should children require emergency

medical treatment. Children further benefit from the services of the community nurse who visits the home and advises on a range of health and medical areas.

Children receive health and medical related care from staff who are trained in medication administration, first aid and epilepsy management. Children's health is further promoted via the community nurses involvement with the home. Clear and accurate medication records are kept and medication is securely held in a locked cabinet

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Staff treat children with dignity and respect their privacy and attend to their personal and intimate care needs in a caring and sensitive manner. Staff are aware of the importance of confidentiality and confidential records are securely held in locked facilities within a locked office.

Children are aware of the home's complaints procedure via symbol form, and parents and children have unrestricted access to the relevant procedures, advocates and the borough council children's rights officer. The high standard of care and support provided helps to reduce the likelihood of complaints arising and no complaints have been received since the last inspection.

Children are protected from harm and abuse by staff who are trained in child protection, are aware and alert to the importance of safeguarding issues and who are familiar with the home's child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures. Children receive close supervision with staff being attentive to children's safety and well-being. There are no current child protection or safeguarding issues within the home.

Children live in a bullying free environment and the caring and supportive atmosphere helps to reduce the likelihood of bullying occurring. There is sufficient information available in a suitable format for the children that reinforce the unacceptability of bullying. There is a clear missing persons policy and procedure, though no unauthorised absences have occurred, with children feeling safe and secure within the home's care.

Children's behaviour is well managed and promoted by staff who are trained in behaviour management and who have excellent working relationships with children. Staff demonstrate interest, patience and sensitivity in their dealings with young people. Children respond positively to staff requests and instructions and no significant issues regarding behaviour management and control are evident. Any sections and restraint used is clearly recorded and is appropriate and necessary in the circumstances described in the records.

Children live in a safe and closely monitored environment. The home takes active steps to keep children, staff and visitors safe from the inherent risk of fire and other safety hazards. Standards of cleanliness and hygiene are high throughout the home and no safety hazards are evident in the premises.

The home's recruitment and vetting procedures have full regard for equal opportunity and equality and diversity issues. The home's recruitment and vetting procedures are robust and sound and staff files contain all required information, including two written references and checks via the Criminal Records Bureau at enhanced level. The home's recruitment arrangements help to ensure that only suitable staff are employed to look after the children

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from a committed and experienced staff team and link workers provide a high level of care and support to the children giving both physical and emotional care in a compassionate and sensitive manner. Link workers write children's care plans and review reports and liaise with parents and a range of professionals who also provide input into the holistic care of individual children. Children are further supported by advocates and the borough children's rights officer as appropriate.

Staff have full regard for children's education and learning and encourage them to participate in a range of sedentary and active pastimes. Children benefit from a range of education, learning and play equipment and materials being available and accessible at the home and also engage on excursions outside the home. Link workers liaise with schools that children attend and they are familiar with children's personal education plans and statements of special educational needs which are held on their individual files.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from having comprehensive care plans in place which cover a range of key areas and are monitored and reviewed by staff on a regular basis. There is provision within the care plans for equality and diversity issues and any special considerations and needs. Parents are consulted and actively involved in care planning and contribute as appropriate.

The home ensures that children are reviewed within the statutory timescales. Staff ensure that children have an opportunity to attend their reviews and make contributions to their plans through verbal, written or alternative communication methods. Link workers write the appropriate sections of the review reports and assist children in expressing their views and opinions at reviews.

Any contact that children have with their parents or significant others is clearly recorded.

The home's clear admissions criteria and process ensures that only appropriate placements are made at the home. The home contributes to transition plans and independence training as appropriate when children return home or move to an adult service following their respite placements at the home.

Children engage in consultation processes where they can express their views, opinions and exercise choice via specialist communication methods if appropriate. Parents are also consulted regarding aspects of their children's care.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

The home contributes to children's transition plans and independence training when children are due to return home, or move to an adult placement, following their periods of respite care at the home.

Parents supply pocket money and personal requisites.

Children stay in a safe, homely and comfortable environment which is decorated and furnished to a very good standard and is well maintained. All communal areas are bright, cheerful and child centred with an abundance of age-appropriate pictures and posters displayed. Children benefit from a well-equipped play room and a sensory room and a well-equipped garden with a range of play apparatus. Children have privacy in their single bedrooms, which are personalised to varying standards. Toilet and bathing facilities are well equipped and afford good privacy.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The promotion of equal opportunities and equality and diversity is outstanding with the home catering for a range of disabilities and differences. It provides information about the service in other languages. The home is organised and managed to a high professional standard and affords an equally high standard of care and support to the resident children.

Parents and children are given sufficient information about the home via the home's Statement of Purpose and children's guide, which is also available in other languages. The information they receive accurately describes the service and facilities provided at the home.

Children receive a high standard of care and support from a well-managed, trained and supervised staff team who perform their duties in a committed, competent and professional manner. The staff team are sufficient in number, experienced and have the special communication skills to meet the children's needs and enables the home to achieve its aims and objectives.

There is a high level of communication between staff with meetings and information exchange forums held on a regular basis. Staff confirm the home's training and supervision arrangements and are supportive of the home's management and ethos. They also agree the home has full regard for equality and diversity issues and that no discriminatory attitudes or practices exist within the service. There is a sound and effective standard of internal quality assurance scrutiny and monitoring via regular monthly audits undertaken by the home's senior staff and Regulation 33 monthly visits undertaken by representatives of the borough council. Parents' questionnaires are also used to assist in this process. The home has an annual development plan for the current year and a current insurance liability certificate is held which complies with the borough council's responsibilities as an employer.

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

There are no recommendations.