

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Joanna Heller
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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 outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

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

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This was an interim unannounced inspection carried out as part of the annual inspection programme. All key national minimum standards in the outcome area of staying safe and standards relating to accommodation were checked. Progress on the only recommendation made during the last inspection was also assessed. Two young people using the service were involved in the inspection, showing the inspector around the building and chatting for a while.

Staff and young people enjoy positive relationships ensuring young people feel safe and well cared for. Clear rules and boundaries are in place, as are systems to reward positive behaviour. Staff and management ensure that young people are effectively safeguarded.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the manager was asked to ensure that records of staff induction fully evidence the comprehensive induction process taking place. The manager has reviewed the induction process and how it is recorded, ensuring that this now fully demonstrates the processes followed.

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 in place to safeguard young people. Positive relationships between young people, management and staff enable young people to feel safe, valued and well cared for. Young people say that they would grade the home as brilliant.

The building is well maintained and effective 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 hazardous chemicals and knives appropriately. Food storage arrangements are good and staff are trained in food hygiene and first aid. 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 staff and young people remains confidential. Young people have excellent relationships with staff and feel able to discuss any issues with members of staff, confident that the information will not be inappropriately shared with anyone else.

Good systems of behaviour management are in place which are supported by the positive relationships with staff. The home has reasonable house rules which young people feel are clear and fair. Few sanctions are applied. Staff and management find that discussing behaviour, the consequences and impact on others is more effective with the current client group. Where sanctions are applied, these 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 and are moving towards a therapeutic approach. Staff are trained in restraint techniques; however, no restraints have taken place.

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 external 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.

The home is able to demonstrate that complaints are effectively responded to, investigated and managed. Young people know how to complain and have confidence in the home's ability to respond to any issues of concern which they may raise.

Young people are safeguarded from unsuitable people gaining employment in the home through robust vetting practices. The home ensures that checks on people's 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 not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is not judged.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

The building is well decorated and maintained, and meets the needs of the young people. Individual bedrooms are provided which are able to be decorated and personalised according to the young people's wishes. Sufficient toilets and bathrooms are provided. Furniture and fittings are domestic in style and serve to make the house feel homely and comfortable. The manager and staff ensure the house is continually invested in and is somewhere the young people are proud to call home. The home is situated close to the busy town centre and is supplied with good transport links into and around the city.

Organisation

The organisation is not judged.