

## Inspection report for Children's Home

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<b>Inspection date</b>	08/12/2010
<b>Inspector</b>	Shaun Common / Gwen Buckley
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Random

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	01/07/2010
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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 is managed by a local authority and is located in a small town in the Midlands. It comprises of three purpose built separate living units, providing a total of 18 secure places, catering for children and young people aged between 10 and 17 upon admission.

Two of the units provide care for six boys and the other unit caters for six girls. The home has education on site and internal and external recreation areas are available. The home also has a large gymnasium and a range of other accommodation, including offices, kitchens, medical and meeting rooms. High levels of security are maintained within the building and outside where there is access to a BMX track. Mobility, time away from the home, is provided subject to risk assessments and agreement with the placing authority.

Three of the 18 places are for children placed on welfare grounds and 15 are commissioned by the Youth Justice Board for those serving sentences or remanded by the courts to a secure setting.

There were 17 young people resident at the time of the inspection and all those present had the opportunity to talk to inspectors and their views contributed toward the findings.

## **Summary**

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an unannounced interim inspection to monitor progress against the statutory requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection in July 2010. All of the key standards in the outcome area of staying safe were assessed during this visit.

The particular strengths of the home include the excellent relationships between the staff and young people and in the implementation of the restraint minimisation strategy. Areas for development are; consistent formal supervision for staff; development of a child protection procedure; consideration of upgrading all taps and sinks to anti-ligature specifications; keeping accurate records of all single separation events and ensuring that reports from visits carried out under Regulation 33 are provided in a timely manner.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

The registered persons were asked at the last inspection to ensure all parts of the home are kept clean, records of sanctions are accurately maintained, increase opportunities for vocational and work based learning, implement the planned independence programme and to revise and maintain the system for recording staff training. All these matters have been addressed and help to improve the overall quality of care provided to young people.

The registered persons were also asked to ensure all staff receive appropriate formal supervision. The frequency and consistency of supervision has increased; however further improvement is still needed to ensure staff receive the required level of support. They were asked to ensure reports from external monitoring visits are provided in a timely manner. Some reports have been provided in required timescales though delays still remain in some cases. The registered persons were asked to ensure that single separation records are accurately maintained. Although monitoring takes place of these records, some discrepancies continue to exist. Managers are working with staff to address this issue. They were asked to consider upgrading all taps and sinks to modern anti-ligature specification. An application has been made to the Department for Education for funding for this work and the home is awaiting the decision in respect of this application.

Work is progressing and developing in all of these areas; however as these matters have not yet been fully addressed, a statutory requirement and recommendations will be made in this report.

## **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.

Young people's information is stored securely and they are treated with respect. Staff knock on young people's bedroom doors before entering affording them privacy and promoting their rights. Young people have access to a telephone as determined by their care plan and they are able to keep in touch with people important to them. A policy and procedure is in place for the searching of young people's possessions and individual searches as required. Young people confirmed the procedures are followed and they are treated with dignity.

A good complaints procedure is available and remains effective. Young people have access to good information and know how to use the system for any concerns they may have. If required, young people have access to a translator to assist them in accessing the complaints system. They are able to complete complaint forms

independently or with support from staff. Independent advocacy services are accessible to young people to provide them with support where needed. All complaints are addressed fully and within appropriate timescales and records include the outcome.

A copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures is accessible to all staff in the home. However, the home does not have its own child protection procedure that guides staff and managers on best practice in safeguarding children. All staff have undertaken training in child protection and understand what action to take to safeguard young people, with any concerns appropriately referred to the local authority. Closer links have been made with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice and oversight of any incidents or concerns. This helps to keep young people safe.

An anti-bullying policy is in place that underpins staff practices. Bullying is challenged by staff at all times. Young people stated bullying is not accepted and staff keep them safe. A procedure is in place for young people who abscond from secure accommodation or when on mobility programmes in the community. There have been no incidences of any young people absconding from the home since the last inspection.

Behaviour management policies are in place that provide procedure and guidance to staff in their care of young people. These focus on reinforcing positive messages to young people and as a result excellent relationships exist between staff and young people at the home. The incentive scheme is transparent, fair and known by young people. It has a number of different levels that have increasing rewards and benefits that encourage young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour.

Records of any sanction, single separation and measure of control or physical intervention, are fully completed, kept up to date and monitored by managers. However some discrepancies remain between the single separation central records and observation sheets completed by staff. This means that records do not show accurately the care and support young people receive. Young people are encouraged to comment on the records and their views are considered and noted. This encourages young people to develop understanding and responsibility for their behaviour.

A restraint minimisation strategy is in place and staff are working hard to reduce the number of restraints. This work has shown significant progress and there is a focus on de-escalation and diversion techniques. In comparison with the previous two years, incidents overall have reduced significantly in the last 11 months. In comparing figures from 2008 and 2009, this indicates a reduction of approximately 33% and 50% respectively. Although there has been a recent increase in the use of restraint, this is mainly attributable to a small section of young people who presented extremely challenging behaviour.

Health and safety matters are managed well. Checks are carried out on matters such as gas and electrical installations to ensure the home is a safe place for young

people. Regular tests and checks are carried out on the fire alarm and other essential equipment, such as generators. Regular fire drills are conducted and involve all staff and young people so they know what to do to stay safe.

There has been no new staff recruited since the last inspection. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure that recruitment of any new staff ensures they are the right people to work with children and all checks are undertaken.

### **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/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

<b>Std.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Due date</b>
28	ensure all staff receive appropriate supervision; specifically to the levels set out in NMS 28 (Regulation 27)	31/03/2011
17	prepare and implement a written policy which is intended to safeguard children accommodated from abuse and neglect and	31/01/2011

	sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of any allegation of abuse or neglect; specifically include in the policy the matters in the regulation and NMS 17. (Regulation 16)	
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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 accurate records are maintained of all occasions when young people are separated during periods outside of normal bedtimes (LS 3.19)
- submit the child protection procedures, when devised, to the Local Safeguarding Children Board for consideration and comment (NMS 17)
- consider upgrading all taps and sinks to modern anti-ligature specification (NMS 24)
- ensure that any person carrying out visits under Regulation 33, provides a written report on the conduct of the home within two weeks of the visit taking place. (NMS 32)