

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspection date	13/01/2011
Inspector	Kevin Whatley
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	30/09/2010
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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 setting offers care and accommodation for up to six children and young people aged from eight to 17 years who display emotional and behavioural difficulties. Children and young people are normally placed at the home for medium to long-term periods, although emergency and short-term placements are also provided.

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

Six young people were being accommodated at the time of the inspection. Most young people were attending education during the visit, however one young person who was home did speak with the inspector.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This unannounced random interim inspection took place during one day in the week. Key standards found within staying safe were inspected alongside reviewing one recommendation made at the previous inspection. No actions or recommendations were made at this inspection. The setting was deemed outstanding overall. Young people benefit from living in a home where their safety and welfare is continually placed first. Approaches toward child protection and safeguarding remain excellent with robust and thoughtful strategies being implemented to address negative or worrying types of behaviour. Staff have a very good understanding of the young people in their care and respond to them in a firm yet supportive and caring way.

Improvements since the last inspection

No actions were made at the last inspection. One recommendation was made in respect of considering the need to display written responses to questions brought up in the young persons meeting. The minutes of young person's meetings are now openly on display within the home and include responses to issues and ideas discussed by the young people.

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 privacy of young people is taken seriously. Each young person is provided with their own room key and staff knock bedroom doors before entering. Records are kept when room searches occur and these explain clearly why this has happened. All confidential information is stored in an appropriately locked facility within the home's office.

The home has a suitable complaints policy with all young people being provided with a copy on their arrival. Staff regularly seek out the views of young people on all aspects of their lives, through one-to-one sessions and young persons' meetings. No young person has made a formal complaint since the last inspection and none have been received by Ofsted.

Staff work hard to keep young people as safe as they possibly can be. All members of staff receive child protection training and are mindful of their risk taking behaviours and individual vulnerabilities. Risk assessments highlight any risks young people are to themselves or others. Care practices are supported by sound policies and procedures which are completed in line with local safeguarding protocols.

The potentially negative or disruptive behaviour of young people are well known and planned for. This includes issues such as leaving the home without permission and bullying. No significant bullying type incidents have occurred since the last inspection and no young person has raised concerns.

Should young people leave the home without permission they are given consistent guidance and support to consider keeping themselves safe. A suitable process is in place should such incidents occur with all relevant parties being informed in good time including the police. Staff always attempt to stay in touch with young people, often with the use of mobile phones. On their return young people are engaged in dialogue to discuss the reasons why they acted as they did and the potential risks of doing so.

An excellent and individualised approach ensures young people have their inappropriate or challenging behaviours addressed thoroughly. Each young person has a behaviour management plan which details any known or potentially negative, challenging or risky behaviour. Plans are compiled with expert input from a child psychologist culminating in robust intervention strategies which are holistic in content. Such behaviours include violence or self-harm with a clear emphasis on working with young people to assist them to take responsibility for their own actions.

Young people have incentive programmes which are linked to their particular behaviour management plan. Young people are encouraged to meet their targets with rewards such as being given small amounts of money. When young people behave in an inappropriate manner and refuse staff guidance they can be given

sanctions. The use of sanctions is reasonable and is commensurate with the nature of the misbehaviour.

The use of physical restraint in the home is extremely low. Staff receive training in physical restraint, although the idea of avoiding such measures wherever possible is engrained in practice. The culture of the home encourages young people to find alternative ways of dealing with feelings of frustration, anger or upset. No restraints have been recorded since the last inspection.

Robust systems are in place which ensure that the health and safety of young people and staff is addressed appropriately. Routine servicing and tests are completed on fire-fighting equipment and gas and electrical appliances. Fire drills are carried out every month, which exceeds the national minimum standards for this area.

Staff are not allowed to work at the home unless they are deemed fit to do so. The organisation has a thorough recruitment process which ensures all necessary checks are carried out prior to a member of staff starting work.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The recommendations set at the last inspection have been addressed as reported in the improvements section.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is not judged.