

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Fiona Parker
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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

This is a privately owned children's home. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to eight children and young people of either gender between the ages of 8 years and 14 years. The home aims to support children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The home is in a residential area of a city, as such there is a wide range of community facilities close by. The home has single bedrooms and the choice of a bathroom and shower room. There is a communal kitchen, dining room, laundry, lounge, games room, computer room and meeting room. There is a garden to the front of the house and a yard to the rear with outdoor seating. At the back of the yard is a separate building which can be used as an additional educational resource.

There are currently two young people living in the home, both young people spoke with the inspector and were observed interacting with staff.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This is an interim inspection to review progress on the previous recommendations. In addition, the key standards under the staying safe outcome are assessed. Overall young people receive good levels of care from a team of caring and committed staff. Children and young people's individual needs are thoroughly assessed. Detailed risk assessments guide staff on safe caring responsibilities and minimising risks. Children and young people are well informed about their rights and what they should expect.

As a result of this inspection there are four recommendations in the areas of completing fire drills, defining grumbles and complaints, including the name of any physical hold used and repairing an external wall. These areas do not significantly impact upon children and young people's welfare and safety.

The Registered Manager is currently absent and an acting manager is managing this home during the absence.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were three recommendations resulting from the key inspection in August. These related to obtaining parental consents for first aid and non-prescription medication; ensuring strategies for discouraging children and young people from leaving the home comply with Government guidance, and ensuring risk assessments include strategies to minimise children and young people's behaviours which impact

on others.

Improvements are noted in these areas and the recommendations are met. Consents for a range of health matters are available on children and young people's files. Strategies for managing children and young people comply with Government guidance and improved risk assessments cover strategies to minimise behaviours which impact upon others.

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.

Children and young people's welfare and safety is actively promoted by an enthusiastic and committed staff team. Children, young people and staff interact positively and openly. Good policies and procedures suitably guide staff on all aspects of caring for children and young people. They are well informed about their rights including privacy, complaints, room searches and access to their records, 'yes if I ask for my file and I want to read it, they give me it to read'. Overall children and young people say they are safe and happy with most aspects of their care.

Staff demonstrate good awareness of respecting privacy and maintaining confidentiality for children and young people, including children and young people's information. There is an open culture to managing complaints with children and young people being actively listened to. However on one occasion there is not appropriate clarity on defining and unpicking a potential complaint. Although this has been discussed there is some confusion on whether this is being treated as a formal complaint. Children and young people are clear on their rights and the complaints procedure.

Staff employ creative ways to motivate and encourage acceptable behaviours which are subject to regular review for their effectiveness. Staff are suitably trained in managing behaviour and appropriately use sanctions and physical interventions as permitted in standards. Detailed sanction and restraint records ensure practice is accountable. Restraint records are very clear, including the views of children and young people and the manager regularly overviews practice. However on some occasions although the hold is described, the type of hold is not always specific in the record. This does not impact upon the safety of children and young people. They are clear on why sanctions and restraints may be used showing that staff clearly explain consequences and their practice. As a result children and young people are well informed on consequences and what they can expect.

Staff understand the potential for bullying or anti-social behaviour. Clear risk

assessments outline children and young people's individual needs and the dynamics of the group to minimise any fall outs between children and young people. Following some previous shortfalls, staff are now vigilant and maintain supervision levels appropriately for children and young people's needs. Absences are very rare and no safeguarding matters have arisen since the previous inspection. Staff are, however clear on the practice and procedures to follow.

A good approach to safety, through regular tests and checks of equipment, ensures a safe environment. A suitable fire risk assessment identifies potential risks and a plan to counteract these. Monthly health and safety check takes place and mainly address day-to-day maintenance in a timely way. However some loose bricks on an external wall may pose a risk. Generic and individual risk assessments robustly cover a range of activities within and outside of the home. Overall a diligent approach is taken to reducing risks without limiting children and young people's activities and experiences.

Visitors are appropriately managed, have reason to visit and sign in and out the home. Although recruitment files are kept centrally, evidence of enhanced criminal record checks, identification and qualifications are available and confirm these checks are in place.

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?

Recommendations

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

- ensure all staff receive training on what constitutes a complaint. In particular where young people express frequent general grumbles there is a clear strategy for managing and clarifying specific complaints (NMS 16.6)
- ensure a record of the use of restraint in a separate bound book. In particular, if a specific hold is used this is referred to in every record of restraint (NMS 22.9)
- ensure the interior and exterior of the home is maintained in a good state of structural and decorative repair. In particular, repair the external side brick wall (NMS 24.3)
- ensure at least four fire drills, including an evacuation at night takes place in any 12 month period. (NMS 26.8)