

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Merryl Wahogo / Maureen Hamer
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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 home is a short break and respite unit which provides day care and residential short breaks for children and young people with disabilities or additional needs. There are 50 children and young people who currently use this service. The home is registered to accommodate a maximum of eight children between the age of five and 18 years at any one time. Children and young people using the service are carefully matched according to age, friendships and ability and are placed in groups accordingly. The various groups use the service at different times. Overnight breaks are offered from Monday to Thursday during term time and additionally at weekends during school holidays.

The home is purpose-built and is situated in a quiet residential area with an enclosed garden and play area.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This was the unannounced interim inspection covering the staying safe outcome area and improvements. This home maintains the highest standards and continues to be innovative. Staff are a particularly stable team. All this means that young people and their families benefit greatly from the service provided.

Improvements since the last inspection

The manager was asked to encourage staff to routinely record progress on the independence targets specified in care plans. Staff are now doing this reliably on their day notes, which inform six monthly reviews. The details are, however, not easy to pick out at present and the manager is considering ways of producing a proforma to highlight progress on targets.

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.

Staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to maintain both the privacy and dignity of young people while giving personal care. Staff are also vigilant when young people are in their bedrooms because of the high number at risk of seizures. This allows young people's self-esteem to further grow and develop as a result of their visits.

The home uses an accessible complaints board for the young people, so that they can present staff with a symbol for 'listen'. Staff would immediately understand this as an indication of a serious concern or complaint. This is excellent practice. No incidents of this kind are recorded, however and no complaints have come in from parents or carers. On the other hand, there are many and varied 'thank you' cards, demonstrating how much young people and their families appreciate this provision.

The manager continues to ensure that staff have ongoing safeguarding training and staff are able to describe relevant procedures accurately. Senior managers, who are very supportive of this home, confirm that staff are good at ringing in with concerns, or just to ask questions when they are unsure. This means that everyone can feel secure that safeguarding issues are dealt with promptly and efficiently.

Supervision levels, supported by good policies and practice, ensure that bullying is not an issue in this home. Staff act immediately to intervene if they observe negative behaviours between young people. Similarly, young people do not leave the home, without permission, or the group during trips out, because of good security and supervision. Staff demonstrate a thorough understanding of the need for risk assessments to underpin much of their work. This means that young people are exceptionally secure in this setting.

Staff are excellent at managing complex and varied behaviours, based on thorough support plans, such that problematic incidents are rare. For example, staff have only felt the need to use two very minor sanctions and one minimal restraint since the last inspection. This means that young people can gain maximum enjoyment from their visits.

Staff continue to ensure that absolutely all health and safety checks are completed regularly. The manager has also created a new folder of fire risk assessments for every individual young person. These include assessment of any difficulties associated with evacuation at night. Again, this is excellent practice and maximises young people's safety during their visits.

There has been no new recruitment since the last inspection. This reflects the stability of the staff group, which in turn is a result of an exceptional standard of management.

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 good.

The manager has ensured that the recommendation from the previous report, based on excellent analyses of behavioural targets, has been met. As a result, reviews can more easily reflect the progress on targets.

The home remains colourful, welcoming and well maintained. Also, work is finally underway to refurbish the bathrooms, despite setbacks beyond the manager's control.

Organisation

The organisation is not judged.