

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspection date	21/02/2011
Inspector	Sonya Robinson
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	30/11/2010
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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 operates from two separate houses that are in close proximity to each other and this service is linked to a specialist school. Both properties are detached and provide spacious settings situated in a residential area, with local shopping outlets close by. There is good access to a number of parks, cinemas, leisure and recreational facilities. The school that the young people attend is a short driving distance away. This school is also managed by the same organisation.

All young people considered for placement experience Autistic Spectrum Disorder with associated communication and sensory impairment and possible learning disability.

Placements in the home are generally provided for school terms only, with accommodation being provided on weekdays and weekends. Periods of respite care are agreed on an individual basis. There is also provision for children to reside permanently at the home.

Young people were attending their school placement, during this inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

At this unannounced interim inspection, all key standards were not inspected. This inspection focussed on how the service has addressed the actions and recommendations made at the last key inspection in November 2010. The outcome area of staying safe was also assessed. This service remains as satisfactory, overall.

The home has made steady progress since the last inspection and as a result of this inspection, three recommendations are raised, these are in relation to training and a service specific development plan.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection three actions and five recommendations were made.

The actions were in relation to ensuring all staff have undertaken behaviour management training, to ensure maintenance issues highlighted within monthly monitoring visits are undertaken and further that these reports include the views and opinions of young people, staff and others. All of these have been actioned and maintained.

Recommendations made, were to ensure that appropriate records are in place for documenting any instances of room searches and that staff receive at least one and a half hours of one-to-one supervision from a senior member of staff each month. These have been undertaken and maintained.

Further recommendations were made around training for staff and managers for the service and these recommendations have been repeated on this inspection as this training is ongoing at the time of this inspection.

A recommendation was raised to ensure there is a written development plan, reviewed annually, for the future of the home. This is raised again on this inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people have single bedrooms and their privacy and dignity is respected when washing. The accommodation provides space where young people can relax and spend time alone when they wish. Staff respect young people's privacy consistent with good parenting and the need to protect young people. Confidential information is held securely in the each of the home's offices. Room searches are undertaken where risks have been indentified due the complex needs of some young people. When these have taken place, young people are involved as much as possible as a matter of respect.

The home has a suitable complaints procedure which is accessible to young people, their parents and other relevant people. Staff are open to responding to concerns, including those made by local neighbours.

The home has detailed and clear procedures and guidance for responding to concerns about young people's safety. Staff also have access to the local authority's child protection policy and guidance and all have received training regarding this. The management of the home is knowledgeable about the procedures and put them in practice when they have concerns about young people's safety.

Staff are aware of the potential for bullying and provide supervision and encourage young people to deal with any difficulties constructively when necessary. Young people have not been absent from care from this service. Staff place an emphasis on encouraging and providing young people with meaningful and enjoyable things to do. The home has extra security on external doors due the complex needs of the young people placed. Staff are aware of young people's rights, legislation and guidance relating to freedom of movement and follow this in practice. The home has individual

risk assessments regarding young people's known or likely activities.

Staff build positive relationships with young people by explaining and showing young people what is socially acceptable behaviour. Staff praise young people when they do well and reward them. They also reassure young people when they are upset and help them deal with their anxieties and frustrations in a positive way. The home has well-established links with helping agencies, and actively seek advice and guidance in managing specific behaviours.

Staff use various communication skills to encourage young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour. Records relating to physical intervention show that it is used as a last resort, and staff have training in this area. The home places emphasis on building positive relationships with young people and understanding young people's behaviour. Sanctions as such are not used, alternative opportunities are offered if a young person's behaviour is unsettled and this is noted within their behaviour management plan to aid consistency.

Staff carry out regular health and safety checks, including those of the fire safety systems, to make sure that the home is a safe place to live. However, the gas safety certificate has expired since the last inspection. The home took action to address this, during this inspection.

The vetting of visitors and people wishing to work at the home is thorough to make sure young people are protected.

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.

Std.	Action	Due date
26	ensure all unnecessary risks to the healthy or safety of children are identified and where possible eliminated, for example maintaining and up to date gas safety certificate. (Regulation 23 (c))	22/03/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the manager of the home has professional qualifications relevant to working with children and management, which must be of National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at level 4, or another qualification that matches the competencies required by that NVQ (NMS 34.3)
- ensure that a minimum of 80% of all care staff have completed National Vocational Qualification level 3 in the caring for children and young people or an equivalent qualification (NMS 29.5)
- ensure there is a written development plan, reviewed annually, for the future of the home. (NMS 33.5)