

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC059203
Inspection date	04/03/2011
Inspector	Stephen Graham
Type of inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	10/01/2011
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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 children's home is located near to the centre of a rural town. It provides a short break service at weekends and for identified periods during school holidays, for up to six children from the age of six to 17 years who have a learning disability. It is a service provided by the local authority.

The home is situated in its own grounds a short distance from the centre of the town. Accommodation is arranged on two floors with access by the main staircase with no available lift. Children are provided with their own bedrooms on the first floor and there is an enclosed garden and play area.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

The purpose of this unannounced visit was an interim inspection to sample some key national minimum standards. The inspection examined outcomes for young people in the area of staying safe. In addition, progress with the recommendations made at the previous inspection with regard to staying safe and organisation were also examined.

Outcomes for the areas assessed and the overall quality rating are good. One shortfall was identified as a result of this inspection; this relates to some of the records kept at the home and only impacts in a limited way on the well-being and safety of young people. The written agreements used to confirm the action to be taken in response to unacceptable behaviour by young people are not all in place.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection, three recommendations were made to improve practice at the home in the outcome areas of staying safe and organisation. All of these recommendations have been implemented by the manager and the staff team.

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.

The home has good arrangements in place to help make sure that young people are cared for safely. The staff team follow agreed guidance to ensure that care records are completed properly and kept safely stored. Arrangements are also in place to allow room checks to be completed and recorded thoroughly if these were ever necessary to help keep children safe. Young people have access to a telephone to ring home should they wish to during each short break stay.

There are good arrangements in place to ensure that visitors to the home are supervised by the staff team and that children are kept safe when visitors are present. There are agreed arrangements in place to complete checks on any new staff team members to ensure that they themselves are suitable to work with children.

The staff team have completed agreed safeguarding training which helps them to protect each young person coming to visit the home from any potential abuse. Their training is refreshed regularly. Detailed risk assessments are also completed for each young person in partnership with their carers and social workers. These further ensure that young people are protected. The home has clear procedures and agreed protocols in place, which help to ensure that if young people were ever to go missing they would be found and kept safe, as quickly as possible.

There are also agreed procedures in place at the home to help staff respond promptly and thoroughly should any complaints be received. There is guidance in place which helps staff to protect young people from bullying. Young people who spoke to us confirmed that they could talk to staff if they were ever unhappy.

The staff team work positively with young people to support and promote good relationships between them. The staff team are trained in the appropriate use of physical restraint if this is ever needed to help keep young people safe. Written agreements are made and strategy plans are used to ensure that the staff team respond consistently to any behaviour and control problems. However, in some examples the plans discussed are not available on file for reference. The staff team have agreed guidance to follow if sanctions were ever imposed.

Risk assessments and health and safety checklists are used to help ensure that the home is a safe place for young people to visit. The staff team undertake routine checks on the safety equipment in place at the home and also receive training in what to do in any emergency. The staff team discuss and practise this with young people coming to stay at the home.

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 that written agreements regarding the means by which staff will respond to any behaviour and control problems are in place as agreed for each young person. (NMS 22.1)