

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Keith Riley
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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 service is a respite unit that offers short breaks for up to 12 children and young people with severe learning difficulties that may include physical disabilities and additional health problems. It is run by a registered charity which provides support and information services to children, young people and their carers throughout the area. The service is available to children and young people, of both sexes, aged between two years and 17 years. The unit consists of two residential areas located within a modern purpose-built complex that also contains a school and the offices of the charity. All those using the service are subject to a full pre-admission assessment aimed at identifying their care needs. This information is then used to determine if the service is able to meet their specific needs.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This visit was an interim inspection and was unannounced. A number of parents were contacted over the telephone to ascertain their views.

The inspection looked at the progress the home has made with the actions and recommendations at the last inspection and all key outcomes under staying safe.

The unit continues to provide a good standard of care to children and young people with varied and complex needs. There is a caring and committed staff team who keep children and young people safe. The management are currently introducing specific behaviour management training to all staff to further enhance the service being delivered. The environment is of a good standard with specialist equipment to ensure children and young people have equal access to activities. However, there were some shortfalls in health and safety. A soft play room and sensory room are currently under construction. Children and young people enjoy being at the unit and have positive relationships with staff. Parents say they feel their children are safe. It was found some information in place such as risk assessments are not always signed as being agreed with relevant parties.

There is one action and two recommendations as a result of this inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were two actions and two recommendations from the last inspection. All care plans are now reviewed and moving on plans are in place where appropriate.

It was recommended the Registered Manager has care plans agreed by relevant

parties and medication protocols available during activities. This inspection found this to now be the case.

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.

Staff ensure that children and young people's privacy is respected and safeguarded. Staff were observed knocking on bedroom doors. Confidential information relating to each child is kept in an appropriate locked facility. Staff receive guidance on the confidentiality of information. Children and young people in need of assistance to carry out personal care are treated with dignity and respect.

Details of how to complain are clear to children and young people in an accessible form. Parents receive a copy of the complaints procedure and say they are confident in raising any concerns with the management. The complaints log shows a low level of complaints and there have been none received by Ofsted since the last inspection. Complaints are dealt with appropriately. However, recording systems do not always clarify outcomes until reviewed further.

Children and young people are suitably protected from harm and receive a high standard of individualised care. Staff know individual children and young people and their needs intimately and successfully develop positive relationships with them. Staff receive good induction and training in key safeguarding matters with sound policies and procedures in place. Staff display a good understanding of child protection issues and are aware of what to do in the event that they have concerns about a child or young person's welfare. Staff actively engage with other professionals to ensure children and young people are kept safe. Parents say they feel their children are safe while at the unit.

Staff are very aware of the behaviours and dynamics in the home at any one time. The cognitive disabilities of the children and young people means they do not necessarily understand the concept of bullying. Staff are acutely aware of how each child communicates and act appropriately to minimise any issues that may cause distress or disruption to other children and young people. Programmes of respite are arranged so groups of children and young people are as compatible as possible. No incidents of bullying have been reported since the last inspection.

Due to the high staff ratio in the home there is minimal risk of absence. Close supervision alongside thorough risk assessments continue to protect children and young people. There is an emergency protocol in place if a child is missing. There have been no incidences of unauthorised absence since the last inspection.

Staff adopt a positive approach to working with the children and young people they care for and are skilled in doing so. Opportunities are regularly provided for children and young people to engage in constructive activities and to do the things they enjoy doing. The staff group are caring, committed and skilled in meeting the diverse needs of young people. Staff do not use any form of sanction or physical intervention to manage behaviour as the majority of young people are wheelchair reliant. Staff are being trained in the organisation's agreed positive behaviour management strategies to meet the future complex needs of the children and young people being referred. Input from parents, social workers and health professionals ensure that the quality of care plans is of a good standard. Behaviour management plans and risk assessments are well known by staff to ensure children and young people's behaviours are well managed. However, these are not always formally signed as being agreed by parents and professionals.

Arrangements for fire safety at the unit are good with an up to date fire risk assessment, all checks and tests being carried out and recorded as required. The response of children and young people to evacuation procedures have been monitored during daylight hours. However, responses have not been monitored at night. There are good systems in place to provide for a safe and secure environment. The recent maintenance inspection by an external company needs to be completed to include routine inspection of the lift.

Records of new staff employed since the last inspection showed that staff are subject to a comprehensive recruitment process. All necessary and required checks are completed prior to staff working with the children and young people.

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	provide clear guidance to staff and children on what to do in the case of a fire particularly during darkness and ensure the routine servicing of equipment including the lift is completed in accordance with Regulation 23. (Regulation 23, NMS 26.7 and 26.1)	30/04/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure systems in place to promote the safety and welfare of children are clearly signed as being agreed with relevant parties and regularly reviewed (NMS 17.1)
- ensure outcomes of complaints clearly link with written records of action taken. (NMS 16.3)