

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Liz Driver / Gaynor Moorey
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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 setting is registered to accommodate 50 children and young people, male and female, with physical disabilities, complex health needs and learning disabilities. Children and young people may also have a sensory impairment. It is owned by a registered charity. On site is a non-maintained special school catering for children aged three to 19 with complex special needs. Accommodation is provided in individual units staffed by experienced and qualified staff. It has easy access for wheelchairs around the site, including the living areas.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

The inspection was conducted as an integrated inspection of care and education (for which a separate report is available). This was the setting's first full key inspection under the children's homes standards, having previously operated as a residential special school. All key national minimum standards were assessed. Overall the outcome is good with one action and two recommendations made. Ordinarily the judgement of satisfactory in 'being healthy' would similarly limit the overall judgement. However, five out of six areas were found to be good or outstanding and managers concerns regarding medication administration and recording have been promptly reviewed.

The outstanding areas of this service enable children to enjoy and achieve to their maximum potential. They have very clear avenues to communicate their views, wishes and opinions. Complex health needs are assessed and met to a high standard. Care plans are of a high standard and reviewed regularly to reflect changes in care. Special dietary needs are well catered for. Young people enjoy their time at the setting with lots of smiles and laughter seen and heard.

Improvements since the last inspection

This is the setting's first inspection under the children's homes standards and regulations.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people at this setting have their dietary needs assessed and met to a very high standard. They require and receive individual specialist nutritional diets delivered by competent and trained staff. Designated cooks on each unit also provide meals that are nutritious and to young people's preferences. Some young people take lunch at the on-site school. Staff keep individual files that contain very good records of young people's dietary needs, feeding programmes, and health assessments and of how health needs are met. Nutritional need is seen as a dynamic part of the setting with very good multi-disciplinary input where food is seen as a priority.

The young people at the setting have very complex medical needs including intimate care needs. They are identified and delivered by competent and sensitive nurses, doctors and other related professionals. They receive excellent health, rehabilitation and education provision. Residential care staff, doctors, qualified nurses and therapists are on hand to ensure consistency and appropriate intervention if necessary. Residential care staff are trained to give first aid together with qualified nurses employed full time to provide a 24 hour service.

Each young person has regular medical reviews, and these report on progress and needs on a holistic basis. Individual targets achieved are recorded and all areas of a young person's life including education, social skills and awareness and health needs are covered in these reports. Any accident or injury sustained by a young person is fully recorded and reported to the manager who specifies any additional action needed.

The medication practice is necessarily complicated, meeting the high level of need through the co-ordinated working of the school with NHS staff linked to the setting. The setting's policy and procedures for medication administration are currently under review. On the day of the inspection it was noted that young people's records did not always identify if medicines have been given at the prescribed time, for example, some were not signed for in the correct columns and stock control was not readily accessible to staff on the units. The recording of medicines coming into the units for respite care children is not currently held within the living area. There are systems in place for monitoring medication administration, but this is retrospective and it risks a delay in picking up any error in administration.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people's privacy and confidentiality are protected by clear guidance available to staff. Their preferences for personal care are addressed by staff in a sensitive

manner. Individual records are stored safely and securely.

Young people, parents and staff have access to a complaints procedure that is currently being reviewed and is in need of amendments. There are clear monitoring systems in place to ensure they are dealt with effectively and in a timely manner. Young people have access to an advocacy service.

The setting's current policy is supported by additional documents such as a charter of children's human rights, guidelines for handling concerns about possible abuse, local child protection and safeguarding procedures, the Care Standards Act, the Protection of Children Act and Working Together to Safeguard Children. There is a safeguarding children steering group in place that meet very regularly. Young people are cared for by staff who receive training on child protection and safeguarding.

Bullying has not occurred at the setting, and is unlikely given the physical constraints most young people experience. High staff ratios and staff awareness of group dynamics also lessen the risk if it should be identified. The young people are profoundly disabled and are under staff supervision for a majority of the time. Any incidents that could possibly be related to bullying such as name calling or any physical contact are dealt with immediately.

There have been no incidents of young people going missing from the setting, this reflects the high degree of supervision given. The setting has a procedure in place for staff to follow if a child is missing.

Young people do not experience physical interventions as part of behaviour management due to the disabilities and complex needs of each child. The school's behaviour management strategy is based upon the consistent reinforcement of positive attitudes and responsible behaviour.

Young people are protected by health and safety policies and systems. There are very clear lines of accountability and responsibility covering different aspects of health and safety at the setting. The newly employed premises manager is making sound progress on health and safety areas that need updating. Fire equipment is regularly checked and fire drills carried out. Other equipment such as hoists and wheelchairs are subject to regular checks to ensure they are in good working order and safe to use.

Young people are protected by the setting's robust recruitment process that is well organised and up to date with new and future changes in legislation.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Young people receive considerable individual support, guidance and care. Staff adopt a holistic approach and staff are imaginative and creative when looking at ways of

providing care. Very clear placement plans are in place, listing comprehensively the needs of the young people. Staff encourage and support young people to undertake appointments with specialist therapists and health professionals. The young people observed appeared to be at ease in the company of all the staff on duty, and social interaction was both spontaneous and warm. Staff are very supportive and sensitive to any needs or situations the young people experience.

Staff actively support the young people in their education which is seen as a priority. Young people attend the school owned by the organisation. The young people's files contain personal education plans. Each child has clear records on file of their progress at school and the staff provide support in appropriate and creative ways to continue the educational task at the homes.

Staff facilitate access to activities and clubs within the community. Individual and group activities are specifically geared towards each young person's own choice and specific needs such as girl guides and scouts. Each activity is risk assessed to minimise the risk factor for each young person. Staff organise trips for the young people. The home has its own transport to support social and recreational activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Young people's needs are assessed prior to placement. Comprehensive documentation is kept on file to offer historical information on each child. Young people have excellent placement and care plans that identify their health, physical, social, educational cultural and leisure needs. Key workers review the progress of each young person and identify changes to meet individual needs. Key working staff, supported by the manager, produce thorough reports for each review. Placing authorities operate a reviewing process to chart the progress of the young people.

A written admission procedure in an appropriate format aims to help young people settle in. The young people are provided with a guide on admission. Every effort is made by staff to ensure that arrivals and departures are planned. Staff confirm that preparation for leaving starts well in advance of an agreed date and includes assistance from the after care team of the placing authority. Very good support is provided to parents in seeking and securing an adult placement for their child.

Staff encourage young people to have appropriate contact with family and friends especially those in the 52 weeks placement unit. Clear records are kept of each contact visit and telephone call. Staff confirmed that any restrictions regarding contact are made clear to all parties.

Staff consult young people on a daily basis and empower them, as far as it is possible, to consider their circumstances, behaviours, relationships and interactions. The young people are provided with forums both formally and informally to look at any choices and views they may have. This can be with their key workers or with any

staff member. Staff strive to create an inclusive, reflective and participatory environment that encourages consultation and discussion. This is effectively balanced by realistic boundaries.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The home and school provide an outstanding service to support young people and their parents/carers with moving from the organisation. The person who oversees this process has commenced parents and young people introduction afternoons with different services being present, including placing authorities, so that future placement can be discussed. A prompt sheet has been produced for parents and carers assisting them when they visit future placements. The units provide independence training which helps young people to reach their full potential.

A tour of the buildings indicated the home's location, design and size are in keeping with its purpose. The units have large, child centred areas which are safe for the young people to spend time in. The home can offer the young people lots of activities and facilities. Records demonstrated that the home was subject to regular health and safety assessments relating to gas, electrical and fire equipment.

The accommodation is clean and tidy and provides each young person with both communal areas for group living and individualised private areas, such as their bedrooms, where they can spend time alone. Bedrooms can be personalised with posters and pictures. There are adequate bathroom and toilet facilities with specialised equipment and all of the bedrooms are en-suite.

The units are maintained to a satisfactory standard and include a lounge and large dining room. The home is on a rolling programme of renovation and is due a full overhaul of decoration and maintenance including the kitchen areas.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Individualised care takes into account young people's medical, cultural and communication needs. The current group of young people does not reflect the multi-cultural society we live in however, the setting works hard to ensure young people learn about different religious festivals and cultures. Religious education makes a distinctive contribution to the school curriculum by developing children's knowledge and understanding of religion, religious beliefs, practices, language and traditions and their influence on individuals, communities, societies and cultures. The setting has its own chapel which is used on occasions.

The young people, parents, carers, staff and local authorities can access a Statement of Purpose and Vision Statement that describes the residential provision and care young people can expect to receive. It is available in paper format and electronically. A children's guide is available in Makaton format, although brief in its content. Young people's different communication methods make it difficult to have a generic children's guide so the setting focus on giving information individually at, for example, key worker sessions.

The setting is managed by a full time Registered Manager. Young people are cared for by a staff team who are appropriately trained and supervised. Staff are provided with written guidance on the home's procedures and practices although some are not up to date. Staffing is closely monitored with numbers reviewed according to the needs of the children. There are always qualified nurses available on site in order to provide care and support to young people and staff. Staff access a well developed and structured training programme. All staff undertake an induction programme. Following induction training staff go on to further training such as national vocational qualifications.

There are numerous forums and groups that review and assess the service provided to young people. The regulation 33 visitor provides a monthly report on how the setting is operating with action needed if necessary. The registered manager carries out monthly regulation 34 checks of specific areas relating to the day to day practice of the setting.

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
13	ensure there are suitable arrangements in place for the recording, handling and safe administration of any medicines received into the home. (Regulation 21 (1))	24/10/2009

Recommendations

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

- ensure a written record is kept of medication not administered or refused (NMS13.2)

- make sure staff are provided with up to date guidance, procedures and policies. (NMS 28.8)