

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number

██████████

Inspection date

27 July 2010

Inspector

John Chivers

Type of Inspection

Key

Date of last inspection

28 October 2009

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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 outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

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 is for up to three children, aged between five years to 17 years. There is therapeutic input available and the aim of the home is to achieve permanency within a family. The children usually remain at the home for up to two years before they move on. The home was built in the 1950s and is a conventional four-bedroom house with a large rear garden. It is situated on a quiet residential road near to public transport and a few miles from the centre. All local amenities are within easy reach.

The home provides care and support to a high standard for children with a wide range of needs.

Summary

The inspection was a full inspection and unannounced. All of the key standards in the sections being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution, economic well-being and organisation of the National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes were inspected. There were no actions or recommendations to follow up from the last inspection and no actions or recommendations are made as a result of this inspection. The home is managed to a high professional standard and affords an equally high standard of care to the resident young people, having full regard for equal opportunities and equality and diversity issues throughout its operation.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were no areas set for improvement as a result of the last inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Young people benefit from eating a healthy, balanced and nutritious diet and have the opportunity to shop for provisions and prepare their own meals. Older young people have their own food budget as part of their independence training programme. Young people experience food theme nights and sample food from a range of different countries and cultures and learn about the importance of food hygiene. Young people enjoy the meals at the home and appreciate the opportunity to prepare meals independently. Provisions are safely and correctly stored and refrigerator and freezer temperatures are taken and recorded. Standards of cleanliness are high throughout the home's catering areas.

Young people are registered with a local General Practice and visits to the doctor, dentist, optician and other health care professionals are recorded. Young people enjoy healthy and active life styles and are advised by staff of the dangers of becoming involved in potentially harmful activities and habits. Young people benefit from staff who have full regard for their health development and who monitor their health and medical arrangements on a regular basis. Staff prepare and enter detailed health related information in young people's individual placement plans and care plans and have sound knowledge of their health and medical histories.

Staff are clear regarding the home's medication administration policies and procedures which help to ensure young people receive medication in a safe and controlled way. When appropriate, young people may self administer medication subject to agreements and risk assessments. Staff are trained in medication administration and first aid and in the use of epi-pens. Medication is securely held in a locked cabinet within a locked office.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Staff are aware of the importance of confidentiality and treat young people with dignity and respect their privacy. Young people can communicate and meet with appropriate visitors in private and are able to keep valued and treasured personal items in lockable facilities in their rooms. Confidential records are securely held within the home's office and toilet and bathing facilities afford good privacy.

The home allows parents and young people unrestricted access to the complaints procedures. Young people said they are aware of the complaints procedure and know how to make a complaint, though all are clear they have no complaints about the home or the service they receive, openly praising the standard of care staff provide. Any complaint is taken seriously and recorded in detail showing action taken and an outcome. The homely, friendly and very supportive atmosphere at the home helps to reduce the likelihood of complaints arising.

Young people are protected from harm and abuse by the home's excellent child protection and safeguarding arrangements. All staff are trained in child protection and are aware and alert to child protection issues. Young people benefit from sound supervision and comprehensive individual risk assessments regarding them are in place. Young people learn about aspects of their personal safety via their school's curriculum and these areas are reinforced by the home's staff in key work sessions and group meetings. Young people are further made aware of safeguarding by attending personal safety workshops which are run by the organisation for all young people resident in the company's homes. The home has comprehensive child protection procedures which all staff are aware of and where they can be accessed.

Young people live in a bullying free environment and the home's supportive and friendly atmosphere and sound supervision arrangements help reduce the likelihood of bullying becoming an issue. Staff are alert to such conduct and are quick to challenge such behaviour. There are clear policies and procedures regarding missing persons, though unauthorised absences are not a significant issue in the home. The friendly and supportive service encourages young people to want to stay at the home.

Staff are trained in behaviour management and implement a recognised system of behaviour management. Young people enjoy excellent relationships with staff with much communication, interaction and engagement evident. Young people respond to staff requests and instructions in a positive manner and no significant issues regarding behaviour management and control are evident. Any sanctions and restraint used is clearly recorded and young people said the home's standard of discipline is fair and realistic.

Young people live in a safe and well-maintained environment and the home takes active steps to keep young people, staff and visitors safe from the inherent risks of fire and other potential safety hazards. There are regular health and safety checks and fire evacuation drills and fire alarm tests. Accidents are clearly recorded and consistent with the requirements of the Data

Protection Act. There are a wide range of generic risk assessments which are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis and staff are trained in health and safety and fire awareness.

The home's recruitment and vetting procedures are robust and sound and the home's arrangements in this area helps to ensure that only suitable staff are employed to look after the young people.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Young people benefit from having key workers who provide an excellent level of commitment, care and support. Key workers have regular contact with young people, prepare comprehensive reports on their progress and issues and liaise with a range of professionals and agencies regarding young people's care. Young people have access to external advocates as appropriate. Young people have comprehensive placement plans and care plans which key workers monitor and review on a regular basis and have full regard for any ethnic, cultural or diversity needs. Young people said they are very well supported by their key workers and other staff and that they take a lot of interest in their welfare.

The home has full regard for young people's education and learning and young enjoy the opportunity to attend a wide range of sedentary and active pursuits and life enriching experiences. All young people attend school or college and are awarded for their achievements by the home and in turn young people also give staff awards for their efforts. There is excellent liaison and relationships with local schools that young people attend and staff encourage and assist them with homework and provide other learning opportunities. Young people said they very much appreciate staff's input in this area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Young people benefit from having comprehensive placement plans and care plans in place which are monitored and reviewed by their key workers on a regular basis. The placement and care plans are written to an excellent standard and give staff a clear insight of each young person's placement programme. Young people are aware of the plans and are appreciative of the input staff contribute to these.

The home ensures all young people are reviewed within the statutory time scales and that young people have the opportunity to attend the reviews and make a verbal and written contribution to the meetings. Key workers write the appropriate sections of the review reports and their contribution is of a high standard.

Any contact that young people have with their parents and significant others is clearly recorded.

The home's clear admissions criteria and process helps to ensure that only suitable placements are made and that young people can positively benefit from the service provided. There are excellent independence training programmes and transition plans in place for older young people where they have the opportunity to learn a range of life skills and experiences which will assist them in later life.

Young people benefit from being listened to by staff who facilitate a range of forums where young people can communicate their views, opinions and exercise choice. Meetings of consultation meetings show action plans resulting from young people's requests. Young people, parents and social workers also fill in questionnaires and make suggestions to the home. Young people said they are listened to by staff and their views taken into account and acted upon.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

Young people are prepared to leave the home in a planned way following independence training programmes and transition plans which help provide them with the necessary life and independence skills needed for adulthood.

Young people receive pocket money on a sliding age scale, have a clothing allowance and have access to personal requisites such as toiletries. Young people are well presented in age and fashion-appropriate clothes.

Young people enjoy living in accommodation of a high standard which is well maintained. Communal areas are decorated and furnished to an excellent standard, are homely and comfortable. Young people's bedrooms are of an equally high standard and are personalised to varying degrees by their occupants. Toilet and bathing facilities are of a very good standard and afford privacy. Young people said they are content with the standard of accommodation provided and enjoy living in the home. Standards of cleanliness and hygiene are high throughout the home and no safety hazards are evident in the areas of the premises accessed.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The provision of equality and diversity is outstanding with the home having full regard for valuing young people's differences in all aspects of its work. The home is managed to a high standard and provides an equally high standard of care and support to the resident young people.

Young people and their parents receive sufficient information on the service via the home's Statement of Purpose and children's guide which accurately describe the service and facilities provided. The home's Statement of Purpose is reviewed annually.

Young people receive an excellent standard of care and support from a well supervised and trained staff team who are sufficient in number and experience to cater for the needs of the young people and enable the home to achieve its aims and objectives. Staff are competent and professional and clearly demonstrate their commitment to the young people. Staff are supportive of the home's management and ethos and are further committed to the home's equal opportunities and equality and diversity practices ensuring that no discriminatory attitudes or practices exist within the service. There are sound and effective internal quality assurance systems that closely monitor the conduct of the home which helps to enhance and maintain the high quality service provided. Young people's individual case files are organised and maintained to a high standard and hold all required information. There is an annual development plan and the home has a current insurance liability certificate which complies with the company's responsibilities as an employer.

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 meets the Care Standards Act 2000, The Childrens Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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Recommendations

There are no recommendations.