

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number

[REDACTED]

Inspection date

28 October 2009

Inspector

John Chivers / Bill Wallace

Type of Inspection

Random

Date of last inspection

19 May 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 and under 18 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 an 'interim' inspection and unannounced. All of the key standards in the section 'staying safe' of the national minimum standards for Children's Homes were assessed. 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 continues to be managed to a high standard and affords an equal standard of care and support to the young people having full regard for 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 actions, recommendations or areas set for improvement as a result of the last 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 outstanding.

The home has a detailed and informative policy and procedure regarding privacy and confidentiality of which all staff are aware and follow. There is adequate space where young people can receive appropriate visitors in private. A telephone is available for young people's use, though most have personal cell phones. Young people have locks on their bedroom doors and have a lockable facility in their bedrooms in which they can keep treasured and valued possessions. Toilet and bathing facilities afford good privacy. Confidential information and records are securely held in locked cabinets and drawers within a locked office and staff are aware of the importance of confidentiality. Young people are clear that staff treat them with dignity and respect their privacy.

The home has a complaints procedure and a staff whistle-blowing policy. In addition a simplified version of the complaints procedure is held in the young peoples guide. A range of young peoples help and advice lines are displayed should young people wish to refer a complaint externally. Complaints are clearly recorded and evidence thorough investigation, action taken and an outcome, though no complaints have been received since the last inspection. Staff are trained in the area of complaints. Young people said they have no complaints or concerns about

life in the home or about the way staff treat them. The high standard of care and support young people receive minimises the likelihood of complaints being raised.

The home has a comprehensive child protection policy and procedure and the county council multi agency safeguarding procedures are also accessible. Staff receive child protection training at induction and further training via the county council multi agency safeguarding board is held periodically. Young people learn about aspects of personal safety via their individual schools curriculum and this is reinforced by staff during one-to-one and group discussions. The local Police Community Support Officer visits the home and advises young people regarding the dangers of drugs and alcohol abuse and becoming involved in anti social behaviour. Young people have risk assessments regarding their vulnerability and clear strategies regarding potential risks and conduct are in place. The deputy manager said there are no current or on going child protection issues in the home. Young people said they feel safe in the home and that staff have full regard for their protection and well being.

The home has a clear and comprehensive policy and procedure regarding anti bullying, racism and other forms of discrimination. A range of anti bullying information with help and advice lines is displayed within the home. Staff receive training in anti bullying and risk assessments are regarding young peoples' susceptibility in this area are held. Young people are clear that bullying is not an issue in the home and no one is picked on because of their colour, race, religion or other differences and that staff are quick to intervene should such conduct arise. Staff have full regard for equality and diversity issues. The caring and supportive service coupled with staff vigilance helps reduce the likelihood of bullying occurring.

The home's policy and procedure regarding missing persons is available. Any unauthorised absences are clearly recorded and strategy meetings convened when necessary regarding young people presenting issues in this area.

The home has a policy regarding behaviour management and staff follow a programme of behaviour management which is a recognised method of behaviour management in children's homes and children's residential settings. Staff receive training in behaviour management both at basic and advanced level and the home received a 'recognised 'Gold' Standard Award in 2007 regarding their achievements in this area and will be applying to obtain the award again in 2010 when the current award expires. Relationships between staff and young people are of an excellent standard with staff interacting with and engaging young people appropriately. Young people's behaviour is very well managed with young people responding to staff requests and instructions in a positive manner. Any issues in this area are closely monitored and strategies implemented in order to address areas of concern. There are clear and comprehensive behaviour management plans in place and staff discuss young people's progress and issues regarding conduct on a regular basis at daily handover sessions and staff team meetings. The home's restraint records show that only one incident of restraint has occurred since the last inspection. Sanctions 'consequence' records are clear and show that only permissible sanctions are used. Such records are countersigned by senior staff and the home's Regulation 33 monthly visitor. Young people said that the standard of discipline in the home is fair and reasonable and any sanctions are fairly applied.

The home has a health and safety policy and the health and safety 'law' poster is prominently displayed. The area of health and safety is closely monitored and staff receive training in health and safety and fire awareness. There is a current fire risk assessment and records show that

fire evacuation drills and fire alarm tests occur on a regular basis. There are current utility safety test certificates including fire fighting equipment and the fire detection system. Standards of cleanliness and hygiene are high throughout the home and no safety hazards are evident in the areas of the premises accessed. The home takes active steps to keep young people, staff and visitors safe from the inherent risks of fire and other potential safety hazards.

No new staff have been appointed since the last inspection, therefore staff personnel files were not revisited on this occasion. Previously the home's recruitment and vetting procedures evidence as robust and sound and hold all required information including two written references and checks via the Criminal Records Bureau at enhanced level. The home's arrangements in this area helps 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 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 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.