

Meadow Rise

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC032717
Inspection date	04/11/2008
Inspector	Bill Drumm
Type of inspection	Key

Setting address	Meadow Rise, Office Place, Hetton-le-Hole, HOUGHTON LE SPRING, Tyne and Wear, DH5 9JG
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Registered person	Sunderland City Council
Registered manager	Carol Harrison
Responsible individual	
Date of last inspection	03/06/2008

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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

Care and accommodation is provided at meadow Rise for up to six young people aged eight to 17 years who have learning disabilities. The home is a large detached bungalow with enclosed gardens at the back. The home has six bedrooms, one of which has en-suite bathing facilities, a kitchen, laundry room, dining room, two family sized bathrooms and two separate toilets. The home also has two quiet rooms where young people can enjoy activities. An office is provided for members of staff in addition to a staff sleep in room.

The home is situated in a residential area and is near to local shops. The home is close to local bus routes which provide easy access to larger towns nearby with their department stores and leisure facilities.

Three young people live at the home, one of whom was present at the time of the inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

The six outcome areas for young people were looked at as part of this unannounced key inspection. Outcomes for being healthy, staying safe, achieving economic well being and making a positive contribution were good. Outcomes for enjoying and achieving and organisation were looked at and were found to be outstanding. There has been one action and three recommendations made as a result of this inspection.

The promotion of equality and diversity within the home is excellent. Young people are actively encouraged to understand the needs of others and to be tolerant of cultural diversity. Members of staff promote the individuality of each young person and support them to fully access community resources as an equal and valued member of society.

The positive health and well being of young people living at the home is promoted. Young people are encouraged to follow a healthy diet and to take regular exercise. The medication administration procedures need to be reviewed in order to ensure the safety of young people living at the home. Positive and socially acceptable behaviour is actively encouraged. The records used to record sanctions or restraints need to be reviewed in order to fully comply with national minimum standards (NMS).

At the time of the inspection, one young person was present at the home. The young person appeared relaxed, at ease and happy to be there.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection members of staff working at the home have received training in fire prevention and fire drills are carried out at regular intervals. Staff personnel files have been reviewed and up dated to ensure they contain sufficient information to ensure young people are being protected from potential abuse. The home's statement of purpose has also been reviewed. Information about the home's admission criteria and staffing has been added.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young people living at the home are given choice regarding the food they eat and they enjoy a healthy well balanced diet. Where they are able, young people take an active role in the planning, shopping, and preparation of meals. One young person has specific dietary preferences which are fully catered for. Menu's offer a wide variety of meals which reflect international cultures. The home organises at least one meal each day as a social occasion, where young people and members of staff can eat together.

The health needs of young people are identified and their good health is promoted. Young people living at the home are registered with a local doctor, dentist and optician. Young people also receive specialist help and advice in dealing with specific health conditions. All members of staff working at the home have received training in first aid. Members of staff have developed good working relationships with health care professionals, to ensure that each young person receives a high standard of health care. The home does not have up to date consent forms should a young person suffer an accident or require medical treatment.

Young people living at the home are not fully protected by the home's medication administration systems. The home has policies and procedures in place for the safe administration of medication. The procedures make no reference to what action staff should take, if they notice a discrepancy in the recording and administration of medicines or what action they should take if the packaging containing the medication is damaged and the contents contaminated. The home does not have a controlled drugs register and at the time of the inspection, no young people living at the home have been prescribed controlled drugs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people have access to a telephone in order to keep in touch with their families. Personal information is stored securely and the privacy of young people is respected. There are sufficient bathrooms, showers and toilets to meet the needs of the young people accommodated. Bathing facilities and toilets have been fully

adapted to meet the needs of those people who have difficulty with their mobility. Personal care tasks are carried out discreetly and sensitively with those young people who require help and assistance. Each young person has their own bedroom. The home has policies and procedures in place, which explains what actions members of staff should take, when it is necessary to search a young person's bedroom. A room search log is maintained although no room searches have been carried out for a considerable period of time.

There are policies and procedures in place for dealing with complaints in an effective and timely manner. There have been no complaints made since the last inspection. Training in the complaints process is provided for members of staff within staff meetings. Young people living at the home have access to complaints information which has been written in an easy to follow format and which makes extensive use of pictures, symbols and graphics. Young people have access to an advocacy service which supports them and they are actively encouraged to make their needs known.

Young people living at the home are protected from exploitation and abuse. A copy of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) procedures are available in the home and the home has policies and procedures in place relating to child protection. There have been no child protection referrals made since the last inspection. All members of staff working at the home have undertaken training in child protection.

Young people are fully protected from being targeted by bullies. The home is registered for six young people and there have been no recorded incidents of bullying since the last inspection. High staffing levels and vigilance reduces the opportunities for bullying to occur. The home has policies and procedures in place with regard to countering bullying. Members of staff discuss issues relating to bullying and countering bullying during staff meetings. A risk assessment of the times, places and circumstances when bullying might occur has been carried out. Members of staff work with young people to develop their understanding and tolerance of others and the young people's guide contains information, about how young people can protect themselves from being bullied. Information provided, makes full use of symbols, plain English and graphics.

The home has policies and procedures in place, with regard to what action staff should take, if a young person is absent without authority. High staffing levels within the home significantly reduces the opportunity young people have for being absent without authority. There have been no occasions since the last inspection, when a young person has been absent without authority.

The home has policies and procedures in place, relating to the safe holding or restraint of young people and members of staff have received appropriate training. There have been three occasions since the last inspection, when it has been necessary to hold a young person. The home also has policies and procedures in place, relating to the sanctions that can be used to help young people improve their behaviour. Sanction and restraint records are retained within a separate bound and numbered book, used specifically for that purpose. However, the books used do not fully comply with NMS.

Young people are protected from fire and other hazards within the home. Health and safety risk assessments are carried out at regular intervals and regular fire drills are carried out. Appropriate service contracts are in place for emergency lighting, fire extinguishers, fire doors and all disability equipment used within the home.

The home has a stable, consistent and committed staff team and there have been no new appointments within the home for some time. However, there are good recruitment and selection processes in place. Safety checks are carried out to ensure the suitability of each applicant. Each member of staff has provided references from previous employers or those that know them. Staff personnel files include an up to date photograph of each member of staff, to help ensure proof of identity.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Young people living at the home receive encouragement and support from members of staff. The support given to each young person is recorded fully in the daily log. Individual cultural needs are fully addressed. Members of staff work to a consistently high standard as a team to ensure that the individuality of the young people remains paramount and their specific needs are fully met.

Specific educational arrangements are in place for each young person living at the home. The manager and staff at the home, offer practical support to all the young people, to help ensure their regular attendance at school. Individual education plans and personal education plans are retained for each young person. Young people living at the home are actively encouraged, supported and enabled to participate in a range of social activities both within the home and within the community.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Young people living at the home are appropriately placed. Each young person has their own placement plan, which outlines what their needs are and how they will be met. In order to help ensure needs are met, the manager and members of staff undertake individual risk assessments of each young person. Members of staff have an excellent and clear understanding of the individual needs of the young people.

The needs of young people living at the home are regularly reviewed. The manager and members of staff regularly attend review meetings with partner agencies, changing needs are highlighted and appropriate actions are taken. Young people have access to an independent advocacy service to help support them.

Where appropriate, young people are supported and encouraged to maintain regular contact with their families.

The admission procedure for the home includes arrangements for children to visit before a placement is agreed. Members of staff try to make young people feel welcome and to understand what it will be like to live there. Information provided to young people is written in plain English and makes extensive use of symbols and graphics to aid understanding.

Young people are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence how the home is run through key worker meetings and young people's meetings. The relationship between young people and members of staff are excellent. Young people are relaxed in the company of members of staff and are quick to approach them.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The manager and members of staff encourage and support young people to take responsibility for their actions and to develop adult responsibilities. Each young person is encouraged to develop their independence skills in relation to activities of daily living. The pathway plan for one young person was looked at. The plan was not fully completed and did not clearly show what the planned targets were for the young person and how they are to be measured. Alternatives to desired outcomes were not included, should the outcome not be met or the young person's circumstances change.

The home is spacious and provides excellent facilities for young people. The general standard of décor, fixtures and fittings is good. Specialist disability equipment is provided to those young people that need it. Young people enjoy homely accommodation. The house is kept clean and tidy and young people living at the home are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Members of staff actively support and enable young people to participate in community based activities on an equal basis. Tolerance of cultural diversity is promoted and young people are helped to understand the needs of others. The home's statement of purpose fully describes what services young people can expect from living there. The staff profile accurately reflects the current members of staff working at the home and what their qualifications and experience are. The commitment to promoting equality and diversity is explicit in information. Enabling young people to make a positive contribution and to achieve economic well being is fully considered.

Young people receive the care and services they need from competent staff. The majority of members of staff are trained to a minimum National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. This is good.

There are clear arrangements in place for members of staff to deputise in the absence of the manager. Members of staff receive regular monthly supervision. Staff rotas have designated handover periods built into them and the hours worked by each member of staff are recorded.

The numbers of staff on duty at any one time are good. Rota's show that there is a balance of gender wherever possible. Members of staff are skilled, competent and experienced in dealing with the complex needs of young people living at the home. There are clear arrangements in place to cover any management absence.

There are sufficient staff working at the home to ensure that young people are well cared for, have their individual needs met and remain safe at all times. No agency staff are employed to work in the home.

Young people are looked after by staff who are trained and competent to meet their needs. A record of training received by members of staff is maintained within the home. Training in specific health conditions is provided for all staff when the needs of young people change. The health and welfare of young people is given a very high priority.

The care of young people living at the home is monitored regularly. A system is in place to ensure performance is monitored and any patterns or issues requiring action are highlighted.

The needs of young people are recorded to reflect their individuality and daily records are maintained. Information relating to the care young people receive is stored securely. Young people, or their parents, are able to access this information within the home if they request it.

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 for the recording, handling, safe keeping, safe administration and safe disposal of any medicines received into the home (Regulation 21).	09/01/2009

Recommendations

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

- obtain prior written permission from a person with parental responsibility for each child for the administration of first aid (NMS 13.4)
- provide separate, dedicated, bound and numbered books for recording fully all instances when it has been necessary to sanction or hold a young person (NMS 22.9)
- provide suitable training for all members of staff working at the home in the pathway planning process (NMS 6).

59 Cotswold Road

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC032727
Inspection date	10/11/2008
Inspector	Steve Pearson
Type of inspection	Random

Setting address	59 Cotswold Road, Hylton Castle, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, SR5 3LE
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Registered person	Sunderland City Council
Registered manager	Sharon Nelson
Responsible individual	Mick McCracken
Date of last inspection	18/07/2008

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The inspection judgements and what they mean

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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

Cotswold Road is situated at the centre of a housing estate in the Hylton Castle area of Sunderland. The home provides care and accommodation for six young people aged between 12 and 17 years. The home can, on occasion, take emergency admissions providing there is a registered bed available.

Young people living at Cotswold Road have their own bedroom. There are communal areas including a lounge, quiet room and a study room. There is vehicle access and car parking facilities to the rear of the building. There are nearby public transport links to city centre and to Newcastle.

On the day of the inspection, five young people were living in the home and four of them spoke to the inspector about the care they receive.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

This was an unannounced, interim inspection. The inspection assessed whether any requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection had been completed. These were about the recording of complaints, the monthly monitoring of care, promotion of privacy, room searches, recommendations from the local fire authority and recording of medications.

As this was an interim inspection, it did not assess all of the key National Minimum Standards (NMS). However, the inspection did assess how well the staff and Registered Manager protect and promote the safety of young people in their care.

The arrangements in place to keep young people safe are adequate.

Young people are enabled to have adequate privacy. However, the arrangements in place to enable young people to make phone calls to family members who only have a mobile phone are unsuitable.

A complaints system is in place but some young people feel this is not effective. However, the staff and Registered Manager do enable young people to raise concerns and listen to what they say.

The staff are knowledgeable about how to safeguard and promote the safety of young people and there are robust policies and procedures in place to deal with any bullying should it arise. There are suitable policies and procedures in place to respond should any young person fail to return to the children's home on time.

There are some significant concerns about the use of sanctions. Some financial sanctions are very high and some young people feel overpowered by these. Sometimes young people must pay some of these compensations from their clothing allowances. This is unfair and may mean young people's clothing needs are not adequately met. Young people are not adequately enabled to make comments in the home's bound record of sanctions and this means monitoring of fairness is more difficult. The effectiveness and consequences of sanctions are also not being completed adequately and so this also makes monitoring more difficult.

The premises are kept safe. Hazards are assessed and reviewed regularly and equipment and installations are kept well maintained. Staff are recruited safely and all visitors to the children's home are checked appropriately.

Improvements since the last inspection

The outcomes of complaints are now recorded more clearly and so complainants can be clear whether their complaint was upheld or not. The Registered Manager takes into account the views of young people, parents and placing authorities when she monitors the quality of care on a monthly basis. This means shortfalls are more likely to be identified.

The arrangements for privacy in one of the bedrooms has now improved and there is now more accountability for room searches as they are recorded more comprehensively.

The safety of the house has improved since the recommendations of the fire authority have been implemented. Young people's health is better protected now that the reasons for when a medication is missed or refused are recorded.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The care of young people is safe enough but there are several concerning issues.

The staff uphold young people's need for privacy and each young person has their own lockable bedroom. Young people have a separate phone on which they can make and receive calls in private. However, young people cannot phone family members who are only accessible by mobile phone. The phone prevents such calls due to the expense. Young people then have to ask the staff to use the office phone. This contravenes the spirit of the legislation which requires that young people be

able to make and receive calls in private without having to ask the staff. It is commendable that the staff do give young people a mobile phone when they are first admitted to the home. However sometimes, for various reasons, the young people fail to keep it.

The staff enable young people to raise concerns and promote awareness of how to make a formal complaint. Neighbours have also made formal complaints about the behaviour of young people and these have been responded to appropriately. Young people themselves see the complaints system as ineffective. There are two reasons for this. Firstly they feel it takes too long to receive a response. Secondly, sometimes young people want to complain about the behaviour of other young people. In such circumstances they feel it is pointless complaining as the staff are trying their best to deal with the behaviour. The problem they feel is that badly behaved young people should not be allowed to live in the home and cause distress to the lives of others. But they feel placement decisions are not the responsibility of the staff so it is pointless complaining.

The staff have good levels of training to ensure the welfare of young people is safeguarded and promoted. Some of the training is specific to young people living in residential care and it is commendable that such specialised training has been provided. Staff themselves are clear about how to respond appropriately to allegations, suspicions or evidence of abuse. Young people are also protected from the risk of bullying and this is not an issue in the home. The staff also respond appropriately when young people fail to return to the children's home on time. Such issues are recorded in the home's records and young people's files.

There are some concerns about how the behaviour of young people is managed, specifically about the use of sanctions. Some young people feel the use of sanctions is excessive and that sanctions are used much more than rewards. While there was clear evidence that young people do receive rewards and are trusted by the staff, they have received restitution fines for damage to property which were very large. For example, fines of £230 and £250 to be paid weekly out of pocket money. Young people paying such large amounts, while acknowledging their behaviour was unacceptable, feel overcome by the enormity of such sums. This makes them feel aggrieved and hopeless. In such circumstances their behaviour is less likely to improve. Additionally, young people sometimes must pay restitution from their clothing allowance. This is unfair and means young people may not have their clothing needs met adequately.

In the bound book of sanctions, young people are not encouraged to add their comments. An example is that in the 45 sanctions issued in the past 6 months, only 1 comment from a young person has been made. This may be due to the limited amount of space in the book. It is noteworthy, however, that young people have more often made comments about sanctions in their case records. Nevertheless, the absence of comments in the bound book means that monitoring of sanctions is more difficult, especially if any young person's case file is transferred from the home after a they move on. Monitoring is also made more difficult because the staff are entering the reason why a sanction was used where they are supposed to record the

consequences and effectiveness.

The premises themselves are kept safe and hazards to the welfare of others are assessed and reviewed regularly. Professional technicians regularly service the electrical equipment, gas appliances and equipment for preventing, detecting and extinguishing fires. This helps to promote the safety of people in the home.

Procedures are in place to help ensure that staff who are recruited to the children's home are suitable to work there. The staff verify the identity of visitors to the home and details of visits are recorded appropriately.

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
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9	provide young people with access to a telephone, at all reasonable times, on which they can make and receive calls, in private, and without having to ask the staff's permission (regulation 15(4)(a)).	01/03/2009
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Recommendations

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

- ensure there is sufficient space in the bound book of sanctions to enable young people to enter their comments (NMS 22.14)
- ensure young people do not have to pay restitution fines out of their clothing allowance (NMS 22.6)
- ensure that the effectiveness and consequences of any sanctions given to young people are recorded appropriately in the bound book of sanctions (NMS 22).

Colombo Road

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC032725
Inspection date	03/12/2008
Inspector	Steve Pearson
Type of inspection	Random

Setting address	7 Colombo Road, Hylton Castle, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, SR5 3SD
Telephone number	0191 553 5443
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Registered person	Sunderland City Council
Registered manager	Sharon Morag Willis
Responsible individual	Michael McCracken
Date of last inspection	24/07/2008

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Service information

Brief description of the service

The children's home is run by Sunderland Social Services Department and is a detached house in the middle of a housing estate in the north of the city. It looks like an ordinary house in the neighbourhood. The home is within walking distance of local shops and public transport. It provides up to eight medium to long term residential places for a mixed gender group of young people.

Each young person has their own bedroom and private space. There are communal areas, such as a lounge, dining area and 'chill out' room. There is a garden at the front and rear of the property.

Eight young people currently live in the children's home. The inspector spoke with seven young people about the care they receive.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

This was an unannounced, interim inspection. The inspection assessed whether any requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection had been completed. These were about the recording of administration of medication, the recording of complaints, the statement of purpose, monitoring of care, the recording of occasions when young people may fail to return on time, monitoring of the records of physical interventions and sanctions and the size of two bedrooms.

As this was an interim inspection, it did not assess all of the key National Minimum Standards (NMS). However, the inspection did assess how well the staff and Registered Manager protect and promote the safety of young people in their care.

The inspection found that the staff and Registered Manager are effective at keeping young people safe. However, there are some shortfalls which are affecting the promotion of their welfare.

The staff interact warmly and supportively with young people. There is a homely atmosphere and a strong sense of working together.

Young people's need for privacy is promoted well, they can complain formally and informally about issues and these are dealt with appropriately. Staff are clear about how to respond appropriately to any potential allegations, suspicions or evidence of abuse and receive good training in such matters. Bullying does arise but staff respond quickly to deal with this. The premises are kept safe and new staff and visitors are vetted appropriately.

However, the descriptions of sanctions and physical interventions in the relevant recording books are not adequately robust. Descriptions of the measures used are often unclear and sometimes jargon is used. This means it is hard for external assessors, such as Ofsted, to obtain a clear understanding about the use of such measures.

In addition, some significant events are not notified to Ofsted within 24 hours. This means it is harder for the regulator to monitor the handling of such events effectively and safely.

Two bedrooms currently being used by young people are too small. The registered provider recognises this and there are plans to reduce the number of young people living in the home. This will mean the bedrooms become non functional.

Separately, several people expressed concern about the number of young people being cared for in the home. The home is registered to care for eight young people. Several people felt this number is too high. The high number can cause tension and friction between young people. It can be hard to meet the individual needs of young people especially when the attention of staff must be given to addressing problematic behaviour.

Improvements since the last inspection

The recording of medications given to young people is now more robust. Where a young person has not taken their medication this is clearly explained in the records. Consequently the health of young people is being promoted appropriately.

Complaints are responded to more effectively now that the details of all complaints and how they have been responded to are recorded clearly. Sometimes the outcomes are not fully clear but the Registered Manager is aware of the improvements that are necessary here. The safety of young people is further promoted by a good standard of recording when young people fail to return. Such recording now always covers the reason a young person gave for going missing and the actions taken in light of those reasons. There is also greater accountability for the use of restraints and sanctions now that the Registered Manager signs each entry. This also means shortfalls are identified more quickly.

The home cares for eight young people. This is a lot of young people to care for in one establishment. However, the home's statement of purpose now describes how the individual needs of such a large number of young people will be met. This means there is less risk that the needs of individual young people will remain unmet in such a large group.

Shortfalls in the quality of care are now more likely to be identified. This is because the Registered Manager considers a wide source of evidence in her monthly monitoring of care. Specifically, she takes into account the views of young people, parents and placing authorities in the formal monthly monitoring.

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.

Young people are cared for safely.

The privacy of young people is respected and information is handled with appropriate confidentiality. Young people have their own phone on which they can make and receive calls in private. They can also lock their bedrooms and have their own key.

Complaints are dealt with appropriately and young people are aware of how to raise concerns formally and informally. The recording of the outcomes of complaint investigations is not always fully clear. However, the Registered Manager is aware of how to address this issue.

Staff are fully aware of how to respond to any allegations, suspicions or evidence of abuse. They receive training specifically designed to consider the issues about young people in residential care. Some training in safeguarding is provided by external specialist agencies. Overall, the staff receive a high quality of training in such matters.

Some bullying does occur in the home between young people. However, there is a robust set of policies and procedures in place and staff respond promptly if bullying does arise. The home is registered to care for eight young people. However, several people said this number is too high and it created tensions and frustrations amongst young people. Sometimes these feelings were expressed through bullying. They said the optimum number would be between four and six young people. The registered provider has plans to reduce the number of young people and this is commendable. In order to reassure young people, Ofsted does not and will not insist that any individual young people must move out of the home in order to achieve lower numbers.

If young people fail to return to the home on time, the staff respond appropriately and the matters are recorded appropriately. Significant events are notified to the relevant persons and authorities. However, these notifications are not always made within 24 hours of the event. This means the monitoring of young people's welfare is less robust because external people and authorities are not notified soon enough.

The staff and Registered Manager are good at promoting positive behaviour among young people. They prefer to reward for good behaviour. If sanctions are used, these are fair. However, the recording of the use of sanctions and physical

intervention is weak. This is because the description of the use of sanctions and physical interventions is sometimes vague and involves the use of jargon. This means the recording is not adequately comprehensible or accountable to external agencies, such as Ofsted.

— The premises are kept safe and well-maintained. Professional technicians regularly service the electrical equipment, gas appliances and equipment for preventing, detecting and extinguishing fires. This helps to promote the safety of people in the home.

Procedures are in place to help ensure that staff who are recruited to the children's home are suitable to work there. The staff verify the identity of visitors to the home and details of the visit are recorded appropriately.

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 satisfactory.

Two of the bedrooms in the house are small. This means there is not enough room to furnish them appropriately, for example, with a desk and chair or with adequate storage facilities. The rooms are claustrophobic and do not adequately meet the needs of young people. The house itself is well-kept, clean and decorated to a high standard. The registered provider has plans to reduce the number of beds to six. This should alleviate the problem.

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
22	ensure that any description of individual sanctions and restraints is recorded clearly, in sufficient detail and without jargon (Regulation 17(4)(c)).	04/12/2008

Recommendations

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

- provide bedrooms which are of a suitable size to meet the needs of all young people (NMS 23.7)
- ensure the relevant persons and authorities are notified within 24 hours of any significant event in accordance with Regulation 30 (NMS 20.1).

- _Revelstoke Road

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC032715
Inspection date	08/12/2008
Inspector	Steve Pearson
Type of inspection	Random

Setting address	18 Revelstoke Road, SUNDERLAND, SR5 5EP
Telephone number	0191 553 5435
Email	
Registered person	Sunderland City Council
Registered manager	Raymond Irving
Responsible individual	Michael McCracken
Date of last inspection	09/07/2008

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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

Revelstoke Road Children's Home is registered to accommodate up to seven children aged 10 years to 17 years. The detached house has two lounges, with satellite television and a computer, a kitchen and utility room and a bedroom. The first floor has bedrooms and bathroom facilities. There is an enclosed garden area to the rear of the house.

There were seven children accommodated at the time of this visit and two children spoke to the inspector about how they are cared for.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

This was an unannounced, interim inspection. The inspection assessed whether any requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection had been completed. These were about the recording of medications, the handling of complaints, the policies and procedures for child protection and the reporting of such matters to Ofsted, the Registered Manager's monthly monitoring of quality of care, training in fire prevention, the proportion of staff who had failed to achieve a suitable qualification in caring for young people and the recording of young people's views about any use of restraint.

As this was an interim inspection, it did not assess all of the key National Minimum Standards (NMS). However, the inspection did assess how well the staff and Registered Manager protect and promote the safety of young people in their care.

Young people are cared for safely.

Young people's need for privacy is upheld and information is treated with appropriate confidentiality. Young people are fully supported to raise concerns informally and formally. Formal complaints are responded to appropriately. Staff are aware of how to respond to allegations, suspicions or evidence of abuse. Allegations are also responded to appropriately. The risk of bullying is assessed thoroughly. If bullying does arise the staff respond quickly and effectively. They also respond suitably if any young person fails to return to the children's home on time.

The consequences, sanctions, for young people's unacceptable behaviour are fair. However, the recording of the use of sanctions means that accountability is weakened. Young people are not enabled to record their comments about the use of sanctions in the book of sanctions and the effectiveness of sanctions is not recorded. The use of physical intervention is minimal and it is only used in appropriate

circumstances when the welfare of a young person or others is at risk.

The premises are kept safe and well-maintained. Good fire precautions are in place.

Procedures are in place to help ensure that staff who are recruited to the children's home are suitable to work there. The staff verify the identity of visitors to the home and details of the visit are recorded appropriately.

Improvements since the last inspection

A significant number of requirements and recommendations were made at the previous inspection. These have now been responded to appropriately.

The staff now promote young people's health better. A record of medications administered to each young person is also maintained in their case file. This means each young person will be able to access their medications records later in life if they want to. If they move to another children's home their records will also transfer and this will be helpful to the staff in the next home. Also there is better accountability for medications because gaps in administration are explained and the staff have obtained parental permission for administration of first aid and homely remedies.

The safety of young people is now also promoted better. The complaints policies and procedures meet the requirements of legislation, a full and proper record is made when any complaint is investigated and Ofsted is informed when a serious complaint arises. This means the registered provider, the Registered Manager and staff respond to complaints effectively and so young people are better protected. Similarly, the children's guide now contains information for young people about how they can obtain access to an independence advocate.

The safety of young people is now further promoted by having a child protection policy that meets the requirements of legislation. The staff and Registered Manager also now inform Ofsted of the instigation and outcome of any child protection enquiry. This means the regulator is more able to monitor such serious matters.

Accountability for the use of physical interventions has also improved since young people are now enabled to write their views and signature to any incident of restraint.

The safety of young people has been promoted further because the recommendations of the fire authority, that senior staff receive fire training, has now been completed.

Over 80% of the staff have now qualified to National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Care. The staff are therefore more knowledgeable and skilled at caring for young people.

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 Registered Manager and staff take all reasonable steps to ensure young people are safe.

They are good at promoting young people's need for privacy, for example, when the young people's telephone was broken it was replaced the same day. The staff handle information with appropriate confidentiality.

Complaints are responded to well and these are recorded appropriately. The policies and procedures have been updated to reflect the requirements of legislation. Young people are fully informed and enabled to make a formal complaint. Most issues are dealt with informally and effectively as they arise.

Staff are aware of how to respond to any allegations, suspicions or evidence of abuse. They receive training specifically designed to consider the safeguarding of young people in residential care. Allegations made by young people have been investigated appropriately. Good arrangements are in place to counter any bullying which may arise between young people. The staff respond appropriately when any young person fails to return to the home on time.

Sanctions for unacceptable behaviour are fair. However, inadequate recording of use of sanctions means accountability is weakened. Young people are not enabled to record their views due to lack of space in the recording book. And the effectiveness of the use of each sanction is not being recorded. Physical intervention is rarely needed and it is only used in appropriate circumstances. The recording of use of physical intervention is clear and provides good accountability.

The premises are kept safe and well-maintained. Good fire precautions are in place.

Procedures are in place to help ensure that staff who are recruited to the children's home are suitable to work there. The staff verify the identity of visitors to the home and details of the visit are recorded appropriately.

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):

- enable young people to add their comments in the bound book of sanction records (NMS 22.14)
- describe, in the bound book of sanction records, the effectiveness and consequences of any sanction (NMS 22.9).

1 Williamson Terrace

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC032713
Inspection date	22/12/2008
Inspector	Steve Pearson
Type of inspection	Random

Setting address	1 Williamson Terrace, Monkwearmouth, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, SR6 0DF
Telephone number	0191 5532 197 (Regd Mgr 198)
Email	
Registered person	Sunderland City Council
Registered manager	William Anderson (acting manager)
Responsible individual	Michael McCracken
Date of last inspection	30/07/2008

CHILDREN'S SERVICES
SUPPORT STAFF

26 JAN 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 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

Williamson Terrace is a purpose-built home situated close to the city centre of Sunderland. It has access to the local public transport facilities as well as a range of shops and other amenities.

The communal areas include a sitting room, a kitchen/dining room and a computer room. All young people have their own bedroom. Externally there is a car park to the front and side of the building and a garden to the rear.

Seven young people currently live at the home. The inspector spoke individually to four young people about the care they receive.

Summary

The overall quality rating is inadequate - notice of action to improve.

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

This was an unannounced, interim inspection. The inspection assessed whether any requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection had been completed. These were about the recording of medications, the recording of complaints, the Statement of Purpose, the Registered Manager's monthly monitoring of care, the effectiveness of the countering-bullying policy, notifications to Ofsted, confidentiality of personal information, the privacy of the young people's telephone, fire drills and the quality of bedroom furniture and fittings.

As this was an interim inspection, it did not assess all of the key National Minimum Standards. Consequently there was not enough evidence to assess the judgement outcome from the previous inspection. However, the inspection did assess how well the staff and Registered Manager protect and promote the safety of young people in their care.

The inspection found that the arrangements in place to promote young people's safety are adequate. However, there are still some concerns, particularly about bullying. The staff are good at promoting privacy for young people. However, the recording of sanctions permits young people to read personal information about other young people. The arrangements for responding to complaints are good and staff are fully aware of how to respond to allegations, suspicions or evidence of abuse. However, bullying remains an issue of concern. Although this issue is not as serious as at the previous inspection, it is still not being tackled effectively. The staff respond appropriately if any young person fails to return to the home on time. However, a shortfall in recording means it is harder to assess the impact on each young person's welfare when they go missing. Shortfalls in the recording of sanctions and restraints also means there is weakened accountability for the use of such

measures.

The house and equipment within it are safe and regularly tested and maintained. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure the staff working with young people and visitors to young people are safe and appropriate.

— Improvements since the last inspection

The staff now are meeting the young people's health needs more effectively. The recording of medication is accurate and there is improved accountability.

Complaints are now handled more effectively as the Registered Manager is informed by the provider's complaints department of any complaints they receive. This means the Registered Manager is aware of all the issues of concern that arise.

The confidentiality of information is now promoted better since personal information about young people, for example, sanctions is no longer displayed on a whiteboard in the office. The privacy of young people has improved since they now can make phone calls in conditions of greater privacy. Young people's friends no longer have to sign into the visitors book when they visit and this makes the house more homely. Ofsted are much better able to monitor serious events now that the staff inform the regulator promptly about incidents which must be notified within 24 hours.

A whole-house risk assessment for bullying has been undertaken and recorded. This should mean bullying is less likely to occur. There is greater accountability for the use of restraints since these are now described more clearly.

Young people are protected better as the staff now record any deficiency identified during a fire drill and actions taken to address it. Drills are also sometimes undertaken during the night so young people are better prepared to respond appropriately to activation of the fire alarm at any time.

The Statement of Purpose and the monitoring of quality have been improved.

The bedrooms are now more homely and fit for purpose as they have been refurbished and broken wardrobes and lighting has been repaired or replaced.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The staff now are meeting the young people's health needs more effectively. The recording of medication is accurate and there are no unexplained gaps in the administration of prescribed, daily medications. There is greater accountability since the staff have obtained signed permission from those with parental responsibility enabling the staff to administer homely remedies and first aid to young people when needed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Overall, the outcomes relating to the safety of young people have improved and are adequate. However, there are still some significant concerns.

The staff are generally good at promoting young people's privacy. Young people have access to a telephone which is reasonably private and the staff are planning how to improve the privacy here. Room searches, if necessary, are carried out for appropriate reasons and good recording means such searches are fully accountable. However, the staff are not maintaining privacy of young people's personal information in the recording of sanctions. Here, when a young person reads their own records, they can also read the comments and information about other young people. This is a breach of the principles of the Data Protection Act.

The arrangements in place to respond to complaints are suitable. Most concerns are dealt with informally and this is the quickest and most effective approach. There is a suggestion box system which enables young people to raise issues informally. Young people are also fully supported to make formal complaints.

All staff receive regular training in child protection. They are knowledgeable about how to respond appropriately to allegations, suspicions or evidence of abuse.

The arrangements to counter bullying remain inadequate. For example, several young people said it is a serious issue and gave examples of how bullying arises in various ways. One young person said 'it happens a lot'. The staff are trying to address the problem in various ways but it remains an issue of concern. However, this is less of a problem than at the previous inspection.

A protocol is in place when any young person fails to return to the children's home on time. Staff are fully aware of the procedures to follow. However, the recording of the circumstances of any young person's return is not adequately descriptive. This prevents staff from gaining an overall picture over time of how any young person's welfare has been affected when missing.

When significant events occur, the staff are very good at informing Ofsted about them. This means Ofsted can obtain a clear understanding of how well the staff are managing such events.

There are several shortfalls in the recording of restraints and sanctions. This means there is weak accountability for the use of such measures. The Registered Manager or acting manager have not signed each entry made in the sanctions book. Consequently there is less confidence that each sanction will be monitored appropriately. Therefore a recommendation made at the previous inspection has been repeated.

There have also been several occasions when young people have been fined for

behaviour that did not cause damages. For example, smoking in a bedroom or obtaining a light from the cooker. Such sanctions are deemed unfair and they are contrary to legislation. However, the senior management within the provider organisation had identified this concern prior to the inspection and so the practice ceased. Similarly, some sanctions were unclear, for example, a 'bullying sanction' was often used but the nature of the sanction was not described. The senior management also identified this issue and it has now ceased. Young people are not being enabled to add their comments in the book of sanctions because there is insufficient room. This makes it harder to assess whether each young person thinks a sanction is fair and/or appropriate.

The staff have to restrain young people sometimes and they are aware of when it is appropriate to use such measures. However, the records often do not make it adequately clear how the young person's behaviour meant they were a danger to themselves or others or that they were causing serious damage to property. This weakens the level of accountability and means it is harder to be assured that restraints are being used for appropriate reasons.

The building and equipment are safe. Professional technicians regularly service the electrical equipment, gas appliances and equipment for preventing, detecting and extinguishing fires. This helps to promote the safety of people in the home. Fire drills are conducted regularly and a thorough explanation is given to each young person about how to respond if a fire occurs.

Suitable arrangements are in place to ensure that safe and appropriate staff are recruited to work with young people. Visitors are asked to prove their identity and a suitable record of all visits is maintained.

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 satisfactory.

The bedrooms are now more homely and fit for purpose as they have been refurbished and broken wardrobes and lighting has been repaired or replaced.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The Statement of Purpose now has a section describing how staff will meet the individual needs of young people living in such a large group. The Statement of Purpose also now describes the staff policy. The level of staffing which must always be provided is therefore clear for others to read.

The monitoring of quality has also improved now that the manager describes necessary actions in response to issues of concern in the monitoring of care every month.

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
18	promote and make proper provision for the welfare of children accommodated in the children's home by, for example, ensuring that the policy on countering bullying is effective (Regulation 11(1)(a)).	01/11/2008

Recommendations

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

- ensure the recording of sanctions upholds the privacy of personal information, for example by preventing young people from reading about other young people's sanctions when they are given access to their own records (NMS 9.1)
- record clearly the circumstances when any young person returns after being missing from the home (NMS 19.6)
- ensure the Registered Manager signs against each entry in the record of sanctions to confirm that monitoring has taken place (NMS 22.11)
- enable young people to write or have their views recorded in the bound book of sanctions (NMS 22.14)
- ensure that the recording of restraints clearly shows that this is only used to prevent likely injury to the child concerned or to others, or likely serious damage

to property (NMS 22.7).