

4 The Moorings

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC024089
Inspection date	14/03/2011
Inspector	Karen Malcolm
Type of inspection	Random

Setting address	4 The Moorings, Conyer, SITTINGBOURNE, Kent, ME9 9HQ
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Telephone number	01795520777
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Registered person	The Boulters Limited
Registered manager	Sandra Margaret Joyce
Responsible individual	Karen Ann Watson
Date of last inspection	02/09/2010

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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 home provides 24-hour care and support to young people of either sex aged between 13 and 17 years of age. Referrals are considered for young people experiencing severe emotional and behavioural difficulties who have a record of offending behaviour, drug and alcohol problems, mild forms of disability and those requiring assessment for specialist placements.

The home is in a rural village. The immediate area is residential. Accommodation available comprises of three single bedrooms and a self-contained flat for one young person with a separate bedroom, en-suite facilities and lounge. Whilst the home advocates the positive aspects of planned placements, emergency referrals are also considered when appropriate. At the time of this inspection two young people were placed, however both were out at the time of this inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

At this unannounced, interim inspection, all key standards under staying stay and organisation, including the outstanding actions and recommendations made at the previous inspection were inspected.

Young people are confident that their overall safety is promoted and the leadership and management of the home ensure it is run well. The quality of paperwork is good and the consistency from staff towards the young people makes a difference to their overall care and support provided. Staff are able to demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

There has been a change to the overall management of the organisation, but this change has not had an affect on the overall running of the home.

The area for improvement relates to the fire procedures. The Registered Manager is asked to ensure when a young person or member of staff are new to the home, a part of the overall health and safety induction is to include fire evacuation.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the home was required to address five actions and one recommendation. All were met at the time of this inspection. The registered person was asked to ensure the policy and guidance sets out how disciplinary processes will be addressed; these have now been updated. All staff have recently been undertaken complaints training and young people's behaviour management records

now clearly set out all areas of risks. The risk assessment relating to the front door has been reviewed and made safe.

There is clear evidence that young people's overall cultural needs is appropriately explored and any specialist advice is sought when necessary.

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.

There are clear procedures in place that ensures young people's privacy is respected and information that is confidential is handled appropriately and securely.

The home has good links with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB). Staff are able to demonstrate clearly their understanding of why safeguarding measures are in place. Child protection policies and procedures have been revised, updated and communicated to all staff. Staff confirm that child protection training has been provided and that this included all new members of staff. There are no ongoing child protection issues. However, home does ensure that if there are any cause for concerns, these are addressed immediately, through regular meetings and input from the placing authority.

Young people can now be confident that all complaints or concerns they may have will be addressed sensitively and fairly. All staff have recently undertaken training in complaints. Staff are able to demonstrate clearly their understanding of what constitutes a complaint, especially when a complaint may be believed to be a minor concern.

There is an anti-bullying policy in place and this is closely linked to safeguarding principles. Good social interaction is promoted within the home with adequate staff supervision and support. All the young people currently in the home get on well together and generally respond positively to staff intervention. The young people are supported to display acceptable social behaviour both within the home and the wider community.

All significant events relating to the protection of young people accommodated in the home are notified to the appropriate authorities.

Strategies used to help the young people manage their behaviour are documented. There is a good sense of balance of when monetary sanctions have been imposed. In line with promoting young people's welfare and safety, staff work with them to help promote and encourage positive behaviour. Where restraint is used, this is used in accordance with the regulations and the protection of the young person.

The home's response to young people absenting themselves from the home without permission is robust. However, due to the rural location of the home the risks associated with this behaviour is high. The home has in these instances, and on other significant occasions, notified those people and authorities with a need to know of the circumstances of the event and the management action taken. The home works hard at ensuring that the young person knows even if they have been missing for a while they will still be welcomed back to the home. The home has good working relationships with the local police. Young people are aware of the curfew times and what are the consequences if they are not home on time.

General health and safety issues are addressed with a range of risk assessments in place including specific individual risk assessments. There is a clear health and safety induction checklist for staff and young people which includes fire safety. However, there is no consistent approach with regards to when a young person or a member of staff undertakes a fire drill that forms an integral part of their induction.

The human resources team is held centrally by the company's head office and they coordinate staff recruitment. The procedures ensure the home employs suitable staff, who can meet the needs of the young people. All staff working at the home have received an appropriate Criminal Records Bureau check. Agency staff covering vacancies, but this is rarely used by the home. All visitors to the home are asked to sign the visitor book.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Each young person's placement plan is monitored by a key worker who ensures that the requirements of the plan are implemented in the day-to-day care of that young person. The format of the placement plans follows the every child matters format and individual's cultural needs are explored to ensure that their needs are being met within the home and wider the community.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

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This is a well-managed home. Young people, parents and placing social workers have the information they need about the home in a clear Statement of Purpose and young people's guide. There is a stable and competent staff team and clear arrangements for staff to deputise in the absence of the Registered Manager.

The staff at the home are sufficient in number and experience to meet the needs of the young people. Many of the staff are trained to at least National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in Caring for Children and Young People at level 3. The manager is set to complete NVQ level 4 in Management fairly soon. The home has an adequate number of staff at night with the arrangement of two sleeping members of staff and availability of an on-call manager. The home has a good mix of both genders in its staffing group. Staff training in first aid, food hygiene, and safeguarding have been updated.

All new staff members undergo a formal induction and records are kept in order to monitor staff's suitability to work with young people. Young people's files are well kept and stored securely. The monitoring visits of the home are carried out consistently and records are checked and signed off. The Registered Manager monitors the home against the Statement of Purpose to ensure that the care offered remains relevant and current.

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):

- ensure that any newly placed young person or member of staff undertakes a fire drill as part of their induction. (NMS 26.7)