

Holibrook House (Monteagle)

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC037248
Inspection date	21 October 2010
Inspector	Joanna Heller
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	23 September 2009
--------------------------------	-------------------

"The overall
quality rating is
outstanding...



© Crown copyright 2010

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Cripins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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

This service is a residential children's home in an urban area on the outskirts of a large city. The home accommodates up to six young people. The home is indistinguishable from other buildings in the same street and is situated conveniently for access to all local amenities and transport routes. The home cares for both male and female young people. Each young person has their own lockable bedroom. Shared facilities include a lounge, conservatory and a dining room.

The organisation has another children's home and also offers outreach support, independent living, fostering and a school. Five young people are living at the home, all of whom were involved in the inspection.

Summary

This was a key unannounced inspection and all key standards in each of the outcome areas were reviewed. Staff have excellent skills in consulting and supporting young people effectively; ensuring care and support is highly individualised and child focused. Young people say they feel safe and that staff really care. Young people interview stated they would give the home 20 out of 20 and felt that the home should be graded as outstanding.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the home was asked to evidence that one to one staff supervision takes place each month. The manager now ensures that staff receive monthly supervision.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The home has excellent systems for the management of healthcare and the promotion of being healthy. Young people have access to appropriate health services such as doctors, dentists and opticians. Specialist health services are sought where required. Young people of all ages are supported in attending appointments and systems are in place to reward young people who engage with these services. Information about health promotion services is freely accessible. Health promotion discussions take place both in one to one or group work sessions. The support of outside agencies is sought where appropriate. Young people who are pregnant are given excellent support to ensure that both they and the baby maintain good health. For example, staff support them to attend all healthcare appointments and parenting classes with their partner.

The home has safe systems in place for the storage and administration of medication. Staff are trained in managing medication. Clear records are held of medication coming into and leaving the home and of medication given.

Young people benefit from a variety of nutritious home cooked foods which reflect young people's choices and cultural heritage. Young people are able to help themselves to healthy snacks at any time of the day. Young people are supported in developing independence skills,

such as, budgeting, shopping and preparing their own meals. Young people recently enjoyed planning and cooking for a 'cultural day'.

Staff have received training in key areas such as first aid, food handling, as well as emotional well-being and issues which affect young people.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The home has excellent systems in place to safeguard young people. Young people say they feel safe living at the home and that they enjoy spending time with the staff who support them. From discussions with young people and observation of their interactions, it is clear that young people and staff enjoy positive relationships. Young people say: 'Staff really care', 'I am quite a runner but I have not absconded since I have been here', 'I feel safe and that people actually care, 'The staff are really nice', 'It looks like and feels like a family home, 'I prefer it here to any of the many other places I have been' and 'The staff are really caring and I feel I can talk to anyone about anything.'

Regular one to one discussions evidence how young people are encouraged to learn about keeping them self safe and to take responsibility for their actions. Risk assessments are in place for young people which identify their vulnerability and any risks they may pose to others. Activity based risk assessments are also in place. These assessments are regularly reviewed and updated. Staff provide a variety of information in alternative media, such as power point delivered workshops to young people on cyber bullying, ill-treatment, and keeping safe. A policy relating to bullying is in place and information is displayed in the home. No issues of bullying are currently experienced. However, staff have previously been proactive in addressing any issues of bullying and continue to ensure that young people are aware that bullying will not be tolerated. Young people say they feel able to talk to staff about such issues and are confident that the staff team will address them.

Clear systems are in place to promote good behaviour and the home is highly successful in engaging with young people to effect change. Individual reward programmes are in place which are geared to the individual goals for each young person and using rewards which are relevant to them. Young people are able to work towards large tangible rewards such as a mobile telephone, gaming station and flat screen television if they achieve their individually set targets. Sanctions applied are appropriate, clearly recorded and monitored. Staff have received training in restraint, however, no restraint has taken place in the past six months. Over the past 12 months the home has been focusing on becoming a therapeutic unit and has recently enrolled as a member of the 'community of communities'. Young people say that the rules in the home are fair and that sanctions applied are reasonable. Young people also say that staff talk about their behaviour with them, looking at why they acted in the way they did and how they can make choices on how to respond in the future.

The home is able to demonstrate that complaints are effectively responded to, investigated and managed. Young people know how to complain and have confidence in the home's ability to respond to any issues of concern which they may raise. Staff are aware of the principles of confidentiality and files are securely stored.

Staff receive child protection training as part of their induction. This is then built on though external training which is regularly updated. Staff are aware of what to do in the event of an

allegation or disclosure being made. Where any concerns have previously arisen the home has managed these appropriately. Young people who go missing are notified to the appropriate agencies in line with local guidelines and individual risk assessments.

The building is well maintained with regular checks in place to ensure safety is maintained. Fire precautionary arrangements in the home ensure young people and staff are safeguarded from fire in line with current good practice.

Young people are safeguarded from unsuitable people gaining employment through robust vetting practices. No staff are employed until essential checks such as verification of a person's identity, criminal record and employment history are carried out.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Staff ensure that care and support is delivered in an individualised, child focused way. Care observed is very much geared to each child's personality and it is clear that positive relationships exist. For example, where a young person is pregnant, staff ensure that the young person and the baby's needs are identified and provide support to attend all appointments with their partner. Staff have collated a file containing information about keeping well during pregnancy, about having a baby and childcare for when the baby is born. All young said that staff are committed to their welfare and that their needs are well met.

Each young person has an identified key worker and co key worker. Each young person has a detailed individual plan of care developed from the comprehensive assessments carried out prior to admission. Care plans address all areas of need including emotional, social and cultural needs. Individual goals are set and levels of support directed to those areas of need. Young people are consulted on all aspects of their life.

The home has good systems in place to promote the educational and life achievements of young people. Management and staff demonstrate a clear commitment to securing the best possible educational outcomes for young people. The home ensures regular attendance at school and college through the reward system. Staff are clear on the educational goals for young people, offer support with homework and attend all award ceremonies and parents' evenings. Staff ensure that each young person has a suitable educational placement and that close links with schools, colleges and Connexions are maintained. Staff have supported young people in developing their curriculum vitae and securing employment. The organisation has previously arranged for young people to attend the organisation's school at no cost to the placing authority while an educational placement is obtained.

A wide variety of leisure opportunities are offered both within and outside the home, which are geared around the young person's interests. Books, games and games consoles are provided. Young people enjoy challenging staff in activities on the games console or go-karting. Opportunities to go to the aquarium, bowling, meals out and trips to adventure parks are organised. Time is set aside weekly for young people and their key workers to enjoy 'small activities' such as shopping or a visit to the cinema according to the young person's choice. A holiday in Wales funded by the home has been enjoyed. Young people and placing authorities are highly positive about the availability of leisure opportunities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The home has excellent systems in place to ensure the individual needs of young people are met. Before a referral to the home is accepted, a comprehensive assessment process is followed from which an individual plan of care is developed. The care plan is kept under constant review and regularly updated to ensure any changes in need are identified. All needs detailed in the care plan are evidenced and followed through by staff. Any concerns about young people are fed back to the placing authority.

Placements are in most instances planned. Management ensure that the placing authority core assessment is provided to ensure that the home is able to meet the young persons needs. Information is also supplied to the manager on the organisation's referral format and visits to the young person are carried out. Young people are encouraged to visit the home to meet staff and the other young people prior to moving in. The home has demonstrated success in ensuring positive placements and ensuring minimum placement breakdown. The majority of young people move onto preparing for independence services or are successfully re-integrated into their family. Any moves are part of a planned process and are celebrated with a leaving party and gift.

Young people are effectively consulted on all aspects of their lives and information on outside agencies such as 'children's rights' are prominently displayed in the home. Residents' meetings are scheduled weekly but an open door policy and free access to managers means that issues are addressed swiftly. Family members are able to visit the young people at the home and staff maintain regular telephone contact with key stakeholders. Staff manage to promote and maintain complex contact arrangements where young people's family dynamics are difficult.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

Young people are effectively prepared for adulthood. Staff support young people to develop independent living skills informally, following admission, for example managing their own laundry. Pathway plans are in place for young people who are 15 years old and staff prepare young people to work through these. The organisation has in place a comprehensive preparation for independence programme which young people begin to work through in partnership with their pathway plan. Staff are also beginning life story work alongside the pathway plan in preparation for adulthood and are integrating this into the therapeutic work which they are doing in an attempt to repair some of the damaged foundations experienced in the young person's early life. Bank accounts are opened for young people and they are encouraged to save. The organisation pays five pounds into each account each week; this is in addition to any accumulated reward monies. Any monies, bedding, towels and small items of furniture belonging to a young person is theirs to take when they leave. Personal toiletries and clothing are purchased by the young people with staff support as appropriate.

Young people moving on to semi-independence, generally do so within the organisation as it operates a semi-independence scheme. This ensures a smooth and less intimidating transition process. Staff from the home provide transitional support until the young person is settled into the semi-independence unit. Young people also receive outreach support from staff from the home where appropriate.

The building itself is indistinguishable from other houses in the locality. Young people like the fact that it is not institutional either internally or externally and said that, 'It looks like and feels like a family home.' Young people like the internal décor and furnishings and are consulted when changes are made. They have their own lockable bedroom which they are able to personalise. Sufficient bathrooms are provided to meet young people's needs. The building is well maintained and decorated with several areas having been redecorated and improved in the past six months. A large tropical fish tank has been installed in the lounge which staff feel gives the room a sense of tranquillity. The home is located close to community resources and with good access to transport links.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Young people's individual needs are well met. Staff ensure the language, racial and cultural needs of all the young people are met and provide positive role models for young people. The therapeutic approach to supporting young people places them as individuals at the centre of care delivery ensuring highly individualised, child focused care.

The Statement of Purpose and children's guide are useful documents which are kept under review and serve to inform young people and placing authorities about the services available within the home. The children's guide was developed by young people previously resident at the home and is available on DVD to make the information more accessible to young people.

Staffing levels are suitable to meet the needs of the young people. A minimum of two staff are on duty at any given time day or night with a third at key points of activity. Staffing is deployed flexibly to meet the needs of the young people. The staff team is stable and experiences little turnover. Where extra staffing is required this is covered by staff from within the home or staff from the organisation's 'bank' to maintain continuity of care.

This is a well managed home which ensures staff are competent, well trained and supported. Staff enjoy working at the home and feel well supported. A Registered Manager is not in post and the organisation has been actively recruiting to fill this vacant post. The responsible individual advised that an application will be submitted to Ofsted by the end of November 2010. The home has been managed in the interim by the deputy manager which has ensured continuity for staff and young people; minimising any impact experienced by not having a Registered Manager.

Staff feel that they work well together as a team to ensure good outcomes for young people. Staff say that the manager and the management team as a whole are approachable, flexible and supportive. Regular staff meetings and supervision ensure that staff are aware of key issues within the home. Annual appraisal systems ensure staff are clear as to whether they are performing to expected standards. The organisation demonstrates a good commitment to staff training and staff benefit from a wealth of training relevant to the roles they perform. Staff say that training is well funded and they are able to access relevant training of their choice. Core training such as child protection, first aid, food hygiene, behaviour management and health and safety is provided to all staff and updated as required. Staff receive regular guidance and training from professionals such as educational psychologists and consultants specialising in therapeutic work with young people. Such support and training enables staff to reflect on their practice.

Staff consistently demonstrate a deep commitment to working with young people to secure the best life outcomes possible. Young people and placing authorities give highly complimentary feedback on how staff support young people. Young people interviewed said 'they thought the home deserved to be graded as outstanding and they would give it 10 out of 10 or if they could 20 out of 20.' Lots of laughter shared between young people and staff was heard in the home throughout the inspection. Placing authorities give highly positive feedback about the home including, 'It is a tribute to the organisation, staffing and management of the home that she settled so quickly and continues to engage with the unit in such a positive way. I was impressed by the commitment of the unit to planning and preparing for her arrival and I am sure this made a positive contribution to her experience of moving to a new and strange environment.'

The organisation has good systems in place for monitoring the standards of care within the home. Any issues identified are swiftly addressed. Young people are involved in feeding back on the service through young people’s meetings, approachable management and yearly organisational consultation days.

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
----------	--------	----------

Recommendations

There are no recommendations.