

Callow Park College

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Joanne Vyas
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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

This is a residential college with two homes attached. Most young people are placed for 38 weeks and are aged between 16 and 19 years old. All young people have a communication difficulty and may be diagnosed with autistic spectrum disorder or Asperger's syndrome. The home is part of a larger organisation.

The home is split into two, the main site where the college is situated and a satellite provision set in a small town where young people who are more independent reside. Both sites have good facilities with good access to public transport. The main site also has a swimming pool, squash courts and a climbing wall.

There are currently 40 young people residing between the two homes of which a large number took part in the inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

At this full unannounced inspection all key standards were inspected.

This is a good service. Young people's welfare is enhanced by the positive relationships that exist between staff and young people, and between young people and their peers. There is a strong focus on meeting the needs of each individual young person including supporting and encouraging them to value their cultural and religious backgrounds. The promotion of equality and diversity was found to be good throughout the standards inspected. Staff work closely with a wide range of agencies in order to meet the full range of young people's needs. Young people are actively encouraged to participate in life skills which support their successful transition into adulthood. The Registered Manager has a strong commitment and focus on improvement. A parent said, 'The level of commitment and care from all staff is outstanding, often going beyond the 'call of duty', the atmosphere is supportive and caring.' No actions or recommendations have arisen from this inspection

Improvements since the last inspection

This is the first inspection since the home was registered so there are no previous actions or recommendations.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The health needs of young people living in this home are clearly identified. Services are provided to meet their needs and their good health is promoted. Staff are proactive and responsive to the emotional and health care needs of the children. All children are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians. The home employs nurses, occupational therapists and speech and language therapists who work closely with care and education to promote the health of young people. A psychologist and psychiatric nurse also visit the home on a weekly basis. Each child has an extensive health plan which is up-to-date and states separate health needs and reflects any related cultural issues. Plans are reviewed on a regular basis.

Young people are actively encouraged to eat healthy home cooked meals. Staff promote healthy eating. A new steam oven ensures the food is more healthy than conventional methods of cooking. Young people have mixed views about the quality of the food. However, the cook said she sits in on student meetings to gather their views on the menu. Staff support young people to plan, shop for and prepare meals. A parent said, 'Real life tasks like shopping for a meal, preparing and eating it builds confidence and is well supported.' Young people who have special dietary needs or preferences are catered for. Theme nights are held throughout the year to celebrate events from different cultures and beliefs. Planning for these includes menu preparation. For example discussions were held in student meetings about the organisation of a recent Japanese event they held. All staff and some young people have completed their basic food hygiene training and this is updated as required.

The safe handling of medication is well managed in this home. Staff receive comprehensive training and assessment in the safe handling of medication from qualified nurses. Only nursing staff and care staff assessed as competent can administer medication. A weekly audit is carried out to ensure all medication has been given and records are accurate. Medication is accurately recorded, received and disposed of appropriately. The medication cupboard is secure. All accidents are recorded and first aid is given as appropriate. All staff are trained in first aid and renew their training regularly.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The safety and rights of both staff and young people are protected. Staff are committed to keeping young people safe and are competent in their knowledge of safeguarding procedures. Young people said they feel safe living at this home. They said that 'having good staff members and friends around' makes them feel safe. Staff receive training on safeguarding children as part of their induction and then at regular intervals. All bullying is taken seriously and dealt with effectively. Some young people said they had been bullied but everyone is aware of the consequences of bullying and these take effect immediately. There are comprehensive risk

assessments in place. The high staffing levels, vigilance and working practices adopted by the home go some way to reducing opportunities for bullying to occur. For example, staff work with young people to develop their understanding of the diversity of their community and the importance of tolerance of others through the school and key-care sessions. The home has a written procedure for action when young people are absent without authority. There are few incidents of young people leaving the home without authority. Young people are enabled by the procedures to return to the safety of the home in a supported manner.

Concerns raised by parents and young people are appropriately and swiftly resolved. Opportunities exist for young people to make complaints within the regular student and key-care meetings as well as informally through daily contact with staff. A young person said, when asked what happens when they are unhappy, 'Sometimes walk off, and mostly speak to staff.' Young people are fully aware of the complaints procedure and are given feedback about the outcome of their complaints.

The privacy of young people is respected by staff. The living arrangements provide space where they can relax and easily find privacy away from others if they wish. All bathrooms have appropriate locks on the doors. Staff knock on bedroom doors before entering. All records are kept confidentially. Young people's issues are not discussed openly.

Staff view young people positively and there is a family atmosphere in the home. Young people say the best thing about this home are the relationships they have with staff. A parent said, 'There is a genuine care and respect between staff and students and consequently the students also respect and support each other.' Staff are given training during their induction, which includes de-escalation techniques as well as physical intervention. This is regularly refreshed. Physical intervention is used as a last resort. There have been no incidents involving physical intervention carried out in this home since registration in 2009. The behaviour management plans are comprehensive. Sanctions are applied fairly and appropriately, although young people have mixed views about how fair the rules are. Staff manage challenging behaviour effectively, in a calm and professional manner.

Young people are protected by appropriate vetting procedures for staff. Safety checks are completed and staff only commence employment when they have a satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau disclosure and two satisfactory references.

The home has comprehensive risk assessments for all aspects of safety of the premises and grounds including fire and young people's behaviour and activities. These assessments have taken into account the daily activities in and outside the home. All staff are given fire safety training during their induction and fire drills are carried out regularly. Fire safety equipment is checked regularly and a detailed record kept. As the home has a swimming pool staff and some young people are trained to be lifeguards to ensure the safety of young people when they are in the pool. All visitors sign into the building and must show identification. Young people also sign in and out of the buildings to ensure fire safety. Young people are protected by robust health and safety procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff are positive in their approach to education and its value for young people. A parent said, 'Our son's needs have been consistently central to his programme at school.' All young people attend the college which is attached to the home. Staff attend all annual reviews and forge close working links with college and therapy staff to ensure each young person's education is promoted and supported. Young people take part in educational activities each evening which includes independent travel, cooking and sports. Young people's achievements are celebrated.

Individual support is comprehensively detailed in each young person's care plan. Observations and discussions with staff demonstrate that staff ensure each young person's individual needs are fully addressed. A parent said, 'Close liaison between school and family help to ensure that our son can develop his talents and interests'. Young people are encouraged to value their own culture, language and religion by a diverse staff team. The practical individual support is reflected in the records of key-care sessions along with the variety of planning documentation that is in place. This includes identifying any religious and cultural needs a young person may have. The staff are very knowledgeable of young people's individual needs and the implications this has for their care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff are able to provide a high standard of care to young people and meet their individual needs with the knowledge and understanding they have of them. A comprehensive assessment of need, care plan and risk assessments are in place for each young person. Each young person has a key-care team comprising of care, education and therapy staff who meet regularly to provide an holistic care package. Young people are given targets to enable them to achieve in life skills, education and communication. Young people, their parents and their social worker are consulted about their care plans, targets and subsequent reviews. Any changes to the care plans are effectively communicated to the team. Young people are offered regular key-working sessions (known as key-care) which discuss issues such as education, health, activities, independence work and equality and diversity. A record is made at the end of each shift for each young person, documenting their mood, activities, behaviour and so on.

Statutory reviews are taking place within the required timescale. Records of the meetings are held alongside reports prepared by staff and the young person prior to reviews taking place. Collectively they provide evidence that details areas of progress. Young people's needs and development are reviewed regularly in the light of their care and progress at the home and they are fully involved in this process.

The statement of purpose clearly sets out the home's admission policy. Young people are supported during the admission process and when leaving the home. Staff encourage and support young people in maintaining contact with parents and everyone else who is significant to them. A parent said, 'The communication with us from all members of staff has been excellent.' Another parent said, 'The service is very keen to accommodate and learn from parents.'

Young people are given the opportunity to make choices and decisions. Young people recognise that staff are supportive in helping and guiding them towards making positive decisions for themselves. As a result of consultation with young people, a number of improvements have been made to the home including activities, menus, equipment for the houses and self-catering. Young people have regular student meetings. Minutes evidence that diversity and tolerance are regular agenda items. Young people will often chair and take the minutes of these meetings. The relationships between young people and staff are good. Young people are relaxed in the company of staff and are quick to approach them with any issues they may have.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

Young people live in a homely environment with high quality furnishings. There is a good amount of communal space. The young people have good facilities. Their bedrooms are highly personalised and they can personalise communal areas if they wish; examples of cultural choices are evident. The home is clean and tidy and well maintained. Young people value their home and their surroundings.

Young people have transition plans in place. These are started early to help prepare the young person for adulthood. The key-care team will often visit potential new placements in order to give an holistic view of the placement and its suitability for the young person. They also provide continued support to young people who have left the home where this is appropriate. Staff encourage young people to carry out a variety of tasks independently or with support. These include cooking, shopping, washing, cleaning and budgeting. Young people are also encouraged to take driving lessons and vote where appropriate. Each young person's placement plan clearly identifies independence work young people are encouraged to carry out. Staff provide a consistent and committed approach which supports young people's successful transition into adulthood.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

There is a clear statement of purpose that reflects the practice and functions of the home. The commitment to promoting equality and diversity is explicit in this information.

Staff training is supported by the organisation. An annual programme covers

mandatory training which all staff are expected to undertake. All staff have received equality and diversity training and have either a national vocational qualification at level three or above.

There are sufficient staffing levels to meet the needs of young people. A record of staff shifts is recorded on the home's rota and this shows there is a balance of gender and cultural backgrounds of staff wherever this is possible. Staff hand-over meetings ensure that each shift is appropriately planned and issues arising from earlier are competently communicated. There are also weekly team and management meetings. Staff have regular supervision and comment that they feel very well supported and they are given good professional direction.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Evidence supports a consistent commitment to improving equality and diversity in practice. The quality and detail of young people's plans also supports this commitment. Young people receive an individual service in the home which is designed to meet their personal needs. All staff have a good knowledge of the young people they are working with ensuring their needs are consistently met.

The monitoring of the home by the Registered Manager is evidenced by regular signing of records. The Registered Manager does not currently complete a report on the functions and practice of the home but has systems in place for this to start. A senior member of the organisation also visits at least once a month to check how the home is run and produces a comprehensive report highlighting areas for improvement.

Young people's records are kept in good order and reflect the information necessary for staff to care and support them throughout their placements. Young people are able to access their records and make comment on their care plan.