

Callow Park College

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Joanne Vyas / Catherine Ross
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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 that is registered as a children's home as some young people reside for more than 295 days in a year. Most young people are placed for 38 weeks and are aged between 15 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, a sensory suite, a soft play room and a climbing wall.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This unannounced interim inspection focussed on the key standards under the outcome area of staying safe as well as standards under being healthy, positive contribution, economic wellbeing and organisation. No actions or recommendations were made at the previous inspection.

Staff are committed to keeping young people safe and complaints are taken seriously and resolved where possible. Young people live in a homely environment, with high quality furnishings. Recommendations have been made to improve medication administration records, records of recruitment and the frequency of fire drills.

Improvements since the last inspection

No actions or recommendations were made at the previous inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff have a good understanding of the health care needs of the young people in their care. They are proactive and responsive to their emotional and health care needs. A variety of healthcare professionals are available to the young people including nurses, occupational therapists and speech and language therapists ensuring young people receive a holistic healthcare package. The health of the young people is prioritised by staff to ensure their good health is promoted.

The safe handling of medication is well managed in this home. The home mostly use prescribed medication. Staff receive training in the safe handling of medication. Only staff who are appropriately trained can administer medication. Two staff always prepare and administer medication. Medication is received and disposed of appropriately. The medication cupboards are secure. Medication records are not complete as they do not always show when a young person is on home leave therefore it is not possible to track properly whether a young person has had their medication as prescribed.

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 concerned about keeping young people safe and are competent in their knowledge of protecting them. Staff receive training on safeguarding young people as part of their induction and then at regular intervals. 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. Staff ensure the privacy and dignity of the young people. All records are kept confidentially.

Concerns raised by parents or young people are appropriately and swiftly resolved. Young people are relaxed around staff and quick to approach them with any concerns they have. The Regulation 33 visitor has acknowledged through his reports that staff are not recording grumbles made by young people and has planned further training for staff about recording complaints.

Bullying is treated seriously and recorded appropriately. Staff are clear about procedures to follow if there has been bullying and work with young people to find a solution through key working sessions and house meetings. The opportunities for young people to bully are reduced therefore also reducing the incidence of bullying.

The behaviour of young people is managed well. Physical interventions are used rarely at the home and staff are committed to using other techniques to manage behaviour. Young people are encouraged to discuss their feelings with staff when behaviour that challenges arises. Sanctions are only used with agreement from parents or carers and with cooperation from young people. This enables young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour.

Young people are kept safe at the home. Staff are clear of their responsibilities and the procedures to follow should a young person be absent without authority. Staff and young people have positive relationships. Staff strive to allow young people their independence while also keeping them safe.

Young people are protected by satisfactory vetting procedures for new staff. Although gaps in employment have been explored, a written record has not been kept. All visitors are appropriately checked and supervised.

Health and safety records are up to date however fire drills are not carried out in accordance with national minimum standards. Therefore not all YP have been provided with the opportunity to practice fire evacuation procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The home's Statement of Purpose outlines the home's admission policy. Young people are introduced gradually to their placement ensuring they have a good start to life in their new home. Staff understand that young people may feel home sick and make efforts to relieve this trauma. However, there have been occasions when a young person may not settle well and staff have struggled with their care. This has been fully addressed by the organisation who will be developing the service further to ensure all young people receive good quality care from the home.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Young people live in a homely environment with high quality furnishings. There is a large amount of communal space. The young people have good facilities. Bedrooms are single or shared and are personalised to ensure they meet their individual needs. Bedroom doors ensure privacy as they automatically lock when they are closed and can only be opened with a key from the outside but open easily by using the handle from the inside. All bedrooms have en-suite facilities and are clean and tidy. Some mattresses and bedding are old but these are being replaced. Communal areas are personalised with photographs of the young people. The home is clean, tidy and well maintained. Young people are supported to wash their own laundry and have set days to do this on.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Young people are supported by an appropriate number of competent staff. There is a balance of gender and cultural backgrounds of staff on each shift wherever this is possible. Staff are clear about supervision expectations for young people ensuring they are appropriately supervised at all times to meet their contractual obligations thereby ensuring the safety of the young people in their care.

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 the policy and written guidance for administering medication is implemented in practice. This specifically relates to ensuring administration records do not have a break in dates when a child is on home leave (NMS 13)
- ensure fire drills are carried out in accordance with national minimum standards. (NMS 26.8)
- ensure there is a full employment history, together with a satisfactory written explanation of any gaps in employment (NMS 27.1)