

Ocean Lodge

Inspection report for Children's Home

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Inspector	Patrick Gough
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Setting address

Telephone number	01227 369089
Email	
Registered person	Benecare Ltd
Registered manager	
Responsible individual	
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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

Ocean Lodge is a small home located on the sea front of the coastal town of . Shops and other amenities are close by and good access to public transport allows opportunities to access other coastal towns. It provides accommodation for up to four children on the two upper floors of the building, whilst the communal, education and leisure facilities are on the ground and basement floors.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an unannounced key inspection. The visit was conducted to assess the home's commitment to providing good outcomes for children in relation to the National Minimum Standards and best practice. There were no actions or recommendations for the home to address as this was the first inspection since the home was registered. The home achieves good outcomes for the young people through a committed, well organised and planned approach to providing for their welfare and supporting their learning and development. The young people are encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles and engage in a range of leisure activities to develop their physical and social skills. Young people are supported to acquire the skills to manage their own behaviour through regular 1:1 key working and effective implementation of individual programmes. Life and social skills learning opportunities are accessed both within the home and within the wider community. The home ensures that appropriate educational placements are secured for the young people and proper provision is promoted through regular liaison with the schools and effective advocacy. There is good safeguarding practice supported by clear policies, risk assessments, proper maintenance of equipment and positive staff intervention. The staff team is well managed and fulfils their commitment to providing the young people with the best opportunities to meet their potential. The recording practice is very good providing ample evidence of good consistent practice. Whilst there are improvements to make, the home has made an impressive start and contribution to the well being of the young people who are placed there.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The home makes adequate provision to support the young people to live healthily. There is guidance for the staff in various documents related to the promotion and development of the young people's health. The manager requires the placing authority to provide relevant health histories upon admission and is proactive in accessing the information where there are gaps. Each young person has a health plan, called the 'young person's medical record', which contains essential details on their history and treatment. The plan format is not fully completed so as to specify the needs, identified by the home, to be included in the implementation programme. However, the key session records, weekly and monthly reports and the daily logs confirmed that the staff actively engage the young people in thinking about their health and taking positive action. The young people, in their questionnaire responses, indicated that they receive good food and participate in a lot of physical activity. Personal care needs are included in their placement plan. Much consideration is given to their emotional and mental health needs and, where necessary, referral is made to the appropriate resource for assessment, treatment or advice.

The young people's medicines are securely stored in a locked cabinet. All the staff who have responsibility for the administration of medication have received basic training from the manager, who confirmed that their practice is regularly assessed to determine their competence. Accredited training from an approved source has not yet been provided. Arrangements are in place to receive medicines into the home and dispose of unused stock in a proper manner. All medicines are correctly labelled and homely medicine lists are authorised, in writing, by the general practitioner.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Each young person has their own bedroom with a lockable facility, if they wish to use it, to maintain their privacy and safety. The staff stated that one young person prefers to keep the bedroom door open but that a risk assessment has been completed. The staff demonstrate their respect for the young people's privacy and whilst they remain conscious of their safety needs, they exercise discretion in their supervision so as to enable them to choose how they use their free time. The young people receive guidance on how to register a complaint and are encouraged to exercise that right, by staff, as evidenced in practice documentation, should they wish to do so. The complaints log is regularly monitored and signed by the manager and also by the regulation 33 visitor.

All the staff receive child protection training and have sufficient relevant material to refer to in order to maintain their knowledge of general child protection matters as well as the home's own procedures. The staff are confident in their ability to recognise abuse and understand the importance and relevance of good supervision

and behaviour management in supporting the young people's safeguarding. There have been no incidents of bullying and the staff stated that the two young people relate well to each other. There is clear guidance on how to respond if a young person goes missing and the staff are mindful of the dangers should that occur. The manager has established contact with the local police liaison officer with a view to familiarising the young people with the positive elements of police work so as to promote an understanding of good citizenship.

There is a behaviour management plan in place for each child, compiled by the key worker and manager, from admission material and their own observations. There are clearly identified needs supported by a range of interventions. The information in the plans provides the staff with a good knowledge of the triggers associated with the behaviour and the interventions are focused mainly on de-escalation and positive reinforcement. Few sanctions are applied and where it is deemed appropriate to impose a sanction, it is closely scrutinised by the manager. The recording practice is excellent with very detailed accounts written on each incident and on episodes of physical intervention. There are good recording and data collection systems in place and they are used purposefully and consistently.

The health and safety practice supports the whole safeguarding approach. Fire safety checks are conducted routinely with a fire drill on a monthly basis. All other checks were in place for the registration of the service and remain current. Generic and individual risk assessments are conducted and reviewed on a regular timescale or as circumstances change. The room in the basement, used for education support purposes, has a window which is exposed to the street level. Currently it has no curtains which poses a risk for the occupants. The radiators are too hot and present a potential risk to the young people. All the staff have been suitably vetted according to the rigorous procedures that are in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Each young person has a key worker who is supported by a co-worker. Regular key sessions are conducted with full participation of the young person. The sessions are well planned and reflect the content in the placement plan. There is a good level of detail in the written record relating to the purpose and usefulness of the session and the detail is consistent with the practice as evidenced in behaviour management records. The key worker compiles a weekly and monthly report featuring comments on the young person's health, education, relationships and activities and reflects the progress or difficulties experienced in those periods. These are distributed to the young person's social worker and placed on the young person's file. The young people benefit from their interaction with the staff and feel able to approach any member of the staff team or the manager.

There is a positive approach to providing the most suitable education provision for the young people. Both of the young people have benefited from the home's early interventions, following their admission, to secure an appropriate placement. The

home has worked hard to maintain these by liaising regularly with the schools and supporting the young people to maximise their potential and their prospects. Various essential information is placed on the young person's file, including their statement of educational needs, individual education plan, school reports and all correspondence between the home and the school. The home offers intensive support to young people, not initially placed in school, and establishes links with education personnel so as to devise an interim educational programme.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The home places much importance on securing quality information about the child, upon referral, and where admissions are planned, makes the necessary visits to meet the child in their own environment. Other sources of information include placement meetings with the placing authority and review reports. The placement plan format covers all the major elements of the young person's development and uses the acquired knowledge of the child in their previous environment, as well as a period of observation following admission, to identify needs. The plans are well written and feature measurable targets related to their identified needs. The young people are supported to work on their targets through regular key sessions and other informal 1:1 activities. The plans are monitored by the key worker and the manager through weekly and monthly written summaries and evaluated and amended through the statutory review process. The young person's social worker is regularly updated through this system of monitoring and indicate that it is highly successful. Whilst the young person is encouraged to participate in the review process through discussion and attendance at the review meeting, this practice is not adequately recorded.

A policy paper on 'working with parents and carers', provides written guidelines for parents on the issue of contact. The young people are supported to maintain regular contact with their family, where appropriate, and all forms of contact, relating to each young person, is duly recorded in the log. There is a dedicated room on the premises which is used for supervised and unsupervised contact. The staff and young people meet once weekly on a formal basis to discuss issues relating to their life in the home and pass on any relevant information. The young people are encouraged to contribute to choices of food and activities and other examples of discussion in the content of meeting minutes support the view that the young people are also encouraged to take responsibility for their actions. Whilst this is the formal forum for consultation, informal opportunities occur on a daily basis.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The home is in a good location, near to local shops and amenities that provide many opportunities for social development and inclusion in the local community. Other coastal towns are easily accessible through the home's own transport as well as public travel services. The seafront accommodation is well maintained and prior to

registration was completely renovated. The young people's bedrooms are sufficiently spacious and are nicely decorated. They are adequately furnished and the young people, who are encouraged to personalise their room, expressed satisfaction with their living environment. There are good communal facilities including a well equipped lounge, dining room and games room. The home is equipped with good quality furniture and there is a good selection of leisure goods, such as books, board games and puzzles available for their use. There are adequate security features in place to maintain the young people's safety and all necessary measures are implemented to maintain and improve these facilities. The provision of an 'education room', and a room which can be used for contact with family and others, enhances the young people's opportunity for private study and privacy in general. The young people are encouraged and supported to play a prominent part in contributing to the homely features in the home and the staff have succeeded in creating a living environment which is comfortable, practical and safe.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The home's statement of purpose provides parents and placing authorities with the necessary detail on the principles of care, implemented within the home, to inform judgements on placement. It is periodically amended to include updates on the staff profiles. A member of the staff team has produced a child focussed children's guide, which is also being provided in an audio format for children with learning and communication difficulties. The project exemplifies the home's commitment to consultation with children and using their views to enhance opportunities for others.

There is a good staffing structure which includes the manager and three acting senior staff, who perform shift leader roles and these are currently being coached by the manager to aspire to more senior responsibility. There are adequate arrangements in place to provide management cover in the manager's absence. The manager provides good leadership and is fully supported by a close knit, well organised team of staff. The young people benefit from this organised approach but also from a team of staff which collectively promotes their future life opportunities and advocates on their behalf, where necessary. The home employs sessional workers to support the team where appropriate and this assists with the recruitment of permanent staff, when required, by providing continuity and consistency. There are sufficient staff to supervise and participate with the young people at all times. The staff rota provides for additional cover where circumstances demand. The number of staff on duty reflects the staffing policy and the positive working relationship shared by the team members ensures consistency for the young people. The young people get on well with the staff.

New staff benefit from participation in the home's induction and foundation training programmes. All the core training needs are addressed upon the commencement of appointment and reinforced through the staff participation in the National Vocational Qualification training. There is a planned approach to identifying individual staff training needs through supervision, appraisal and the completion of personal

development plans. The staff are fully involved in the process and are expected to produce an action plan to meet their training needs. The staff indicate that they are supported effectively and encouraged and expected to participate in their further professional development.

The manager monitors the practice through observation and inspection of the practice records. Some responsibility for this is delegated to senior staff who produce weekly monitoring reports which reflect Schedule 6 requirements. Useful comments are made on the respective areas of practice and this is used to make improvements. The young people's files are up to date and contain the necessary information and evidence supporting the home's practice and interventions implemented to promote their well being.

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):

- make provision for all staff designated to administer medication to the young people to have accredited training NMS 13
- keep a written record of restraint practice in a separate bound and numbered book with the level of detail required in NMS 22.9 NMS 22
- ensure that young people are suitably protected from hot radiators NMS 26
- install blinds or curtains for the education room window so as to ensure the privacy of the young people and the staff NMS 26
- provide written evidence that each young person is consulted and prepared prior to review meetings and is fully briefed on the outcome of the meeting NMS 3
- ensure that 80% of the staff achieve National Vocational Qualification at level 3 status NMS 29.