



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

**CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMISSION**  
**19 JUNE 2007**

Report of the Corporate Director for Children &amp; Young People

## Inspection and Management Visits to Children's Homes

### RECOMMENDATION

1. To note the contents of this report.

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

#### Inspections

- 2.1 The Children's Homes Regulations 2001 require children's homes to be inspected by a regulatory inspector of the Commission for Social Care Inspection, which is the regulatory body responsible for registering homes. Inspectors carry out at least one inspection a year and make additional visits from time to time if necessary. They write a report of their visit which contains requirements and recommendations for the registered provider, the Council, to act on. The registered provider responds to the findings and produces an action plan. Inspections are based on national minimum standards for children's homes which are grouped to reflect the five outcomes for children defined in Every Child Matters. From 1 April 2007, responsibility for inspecting homes passed to Ofsted.
- 2.2 Inspections have been carried out at Moorfield on 9 November 2006, Coronation Avenue on 29 June and 23 November 2006, Bute Walk on 14 November 2006, Queensferry Gardens on 25 January 2007 and Cricklewood Road on 4 September and 14 November 2006.
- 2.3 Homes are assessed and scored against 35 standards. A score of one indicates the standard is not met, *major shortfalls*, two that the standards is almost met, *minor shortfalls*, three the standard is met, *no shortfalls* and four the standard is exceeded, *commendable*. An overall rating of *Excellent*, *Good*, *Satisfactory* or *Inadequate* is also given. Following a change in style in 2006, inspections carried out since November have included neither a score against individual standards nor an overall assessment, just requirements and recommendations. Further changes may take place in the coming year as Ofsted establishes its own style of inspection. In the inspections carried out in the last year homes were assessed as shown in the table below.



2.4

Home	Date	Standards Not Met	Standards Almost Met	Standards Met	Standards exceeded	Standards not Inspected	Overall
Cricklewood Road	4/9/06	0	5	23	2	5	Adequate
Coronation Ave	29/6/06	0	1	29	4	2	Good

Home	Date	Issues	Requirements	Recommendations
Cricklewood	4/11/06	Records of minor concerns could not be found, maintenance issues & environmental health visit could not be found.	Address recording deficits.	Record meals taken, cover & label food in fridge, repair children's phone, repair cracked tile, redecorate kitchen.
Moorfield	9/11/06	Children raised issues about choice of meals, restraint and handling of complaints. Shortfalls in restraint recording. Children's phone not working. Lack of privacy caused by faulty locks on bathrooms. Staffing shortfalls.	Locks on bathroom and bedroom doors to be changed.	Independent advocates to chair children's meetings. Behaviour management to be discussed in keyworker sessions. Reg 33 visitors to speak to kids without staff present. Children to have access to CSCI phone number. Children's telephone to be repaired. Staffing breakdown to be supplied.
Bute Walk	14/11/06	Children raised issues about meals, restraint, feeling intimidated. One dental check overdue. Poor physical appearance. Children's phone damaged.	None	Health appointments to be scheduled and recorded. Children to be given bedroom keys (subject to risk assessment). Children to be encouraged to put up posters in bedrooms.
Coronation Avenue	23/11/06	Risk assessments were difficult to find. Bathroom mirror not at suitable height. Some shifts had all-female staffing.	None	Re-fix mirror. Increase hot water pressure in girls' bathroom. Issue lockable cabinet keys. Both male and female staff on duty whenever possible.
Queensferry	25/1/07	None	None	None

- 2.5 The last two inspections for which individual standards were assessed found that there were no standards not met and some were exceeded. In the five inspections since then, minor requirements were imposed on Moorfield and Cricklewood Road, and no requirements at all on the other three homes. Some recommendations were made in respect of all the homes except Queensferry Gardens. All requirements and recommendations have been acted on.

### **Management Visits**

- 2.6 Regulation 33 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2001 requires homes to be visited once a month by a representative of the registered provider who is not involved in the day to day management of the home and a report of the visit to be written. These visits are carried out by managers from all sections of children's social care.
- 2.7 Issues covered by management visitors include:
- The physical condition of the building inside and out
  - The daily life of the home as portrayed in the daily log
  - The use of formal sanctions and their appropriateness
  - Comments of the children and staff
  - Interaction between the children and staff
  - Arrangements for health care and education
  - How children are cared for and how behaviour is dealt with
  - Complaints, compliments or comments
  - Care plans
  - How staff are trained, supported and consulted
- 2.8 All but five of the 70 visits required between June 2006 and April 2007 have been completed.
- 2.9 The majority of visitors provided positive reports of their visits and no serious concerns were raised.
- 2.10 On the whole children and young people spoke positively about their experience of residential care, most appeared relaxed, interacted well with staff and were able to present their views with confidence. There are many positive observations about the approach and work of staff. Young people were also willing to voice their views of how things could be improved. Some young people expressed dissatisfaction with disciplinary measures, especially the use of physical intervention. Others thought that personal allowances and budgets for outings and activities should be increased.
- 2.11 Staffing matters such as vacancies, sickness, staffing levels and morale were raised. In general, the comments made by staff to visitors were positive.

- 2.12 Maintenance and health and safety issues were the subject of frequent comment, as was the general condition and homeliness of the buildings. Heating systems, in particular, seem to have caused a number of problems.
- 2.13 Visitors made suggestions, where necessary, on administrative issues like recording and files. Standards on the whole seem to be acceptable or better, but on occasion the layout of records and the style and language used was commented on. A number of homes had difficulties obtaining essential documents from children's social workers.
- 2.14 Care practices, arrangements for education and health care, managing difficult behaviour including the use of sanctions and restraint, the way bullying is addressed and complaints handled, and children's participation are all addressed in the reports. Difficulty in accessing mental health services is again a feature. Difficult behaviour, including offensive language and racist abuse, was remarked on, as was the practice of involving the Police in more serious matters.
- 2.15 Issues requiring action are always addressed by the homes managers and service managers and monitored by the head of service.

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<b>Background papers:</b>	None
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 1: Implications

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

1. Each Children's Home is subject to an annual fee for registration with Ofsted.

**Legal**

2. National Minimum Standards are based on the legal requirements of the Children's Homes Regulations 2001. Ofsted has power to withdraw registration from Registered Providers or Homes which fail to satisfy legal requirements.

**Personnel**

3. Homes Managers are required to be registered by the Ofsted and are assessed before they are registered. Other staff are required to hold a minimum qualification.

**Equalities impact**

4. Standards require services to be provided which meet the needs of individuals arising from their gender, disability, religious, racial, cultural or linguistic background or sexual orientation. The Home is required to have appropriate policies and procedures and to provide training for staff on these issues.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

5. Children's Homes support the Five Outcomes for Children identified in Every Child Matters, which form the basis of the objectives of the Children and Young People's Plan.