

Inspection and Management Visits to Children's Homes

RECOMMENDATION

1. To note the contents of this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

2.1 Inspections

The Children's Homes Regulations 2001 require children's homes to be inspected by a regulatory inspector of Ofsted, 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.

- 2.2 Inspections have been carried out at Moorfield on 2 December 2008, Coronation Avenue on 16 September 2008 and 27 January 2009, Bute Walk on 23 September 2008, Queensferry Gardens on 3 December 2008 and 12 February 2009, and Cricklewood Road on 19 January 2009.

- 2.3 The purpose of inspection is to assure children, young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. Inspections are carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000. Reports detail 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.

- 2.4 Inspection judgements are given as follows:

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

2.5 In the inspections carried out this year homes were assessed as follows:

Moorfield was again judged to be satisfactory but was not subject to any requirements and was said to be improving. There were two only recommendations, relating to the recording of supervision, restraints and sanctions.

Coronation Avenue was again judged to be good and was not subject to any requirements. There were two recommendations, relating to young people's signatures on restraint records and fencing a section of the garden to provide more privacy. The second recommendation was also made by members when they visited and is being pursued.

Bute Walk was again judged to be satisfactory and was subject to one requirement relating to staff which arose from the high turnover of staff. There were also recommendations relating to health care plans, staff supervision, performance appraisal and monitoring. The home was said to be maintaining its improvement.

Queensferry Gardens was judged an outstanding home until December 2008, when inspectors found that the mix of young people placed was incompatible and made a requirement to address this. A further inspection in February found that the issue had been resolved and the requirement made in December had been complied with. There were no additional requirements or recommendations. The current judgement is good.

2.6 **Management Visits**

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 55 of the 56 visits required between July 2008 and January 2009 have been completed. Any practice issues arising from the visits are addressed with the registered manager and monitored through supervision. Any issues relating to the safety or welfare of children are referred to the appropriate person and addressed as necessary. No serious concerns about children's safety or welfare have arisen from management visits during this period.
- 2.9 The procedure for Regulation 33 visits has changed since 1 January 2009. There are fewer managers on the rota and the report template has been simplified to focus on statutory requirements. It is intended that managers doing the visits will be more familiar with the home, the children and the staff and that reports will concentrate on the safety and welfare of children and the quality of care provided. A new system of monitoring reports will allow the actions taken in response to recommendations to be tracked more easily.

For more information contact:	Rod Jones 01332 717012 e-mail rod.jones@derby.gov.uk
Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1: Implications

IMPLICATIONS

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 and the Corporate priorities of helping everyone be healthy, active and independent and supporting everyone in learning and achieving.