

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S SERVICES CABINET MEMBER

OFSTED INSPECTIONS OF NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE CHILDREN HOME'S

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1. To inform the Cabinet Member of the outcomes of the inspections of all the North Lincolnshire Children completed between January and February 2010.

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 All Children's Homes are subject to annual inspections carried out by OfSTED inspectors. Each home has two inspections each year; they consist of a 'key' inspection which may be announced or unannounced, and a 'random' unannounced inspection which focuses on any actions from previous inspections, or a random selection of outcomes covered in the full inspections with a particular focus on safeguarding.
- 2.2 During this round of inspections, one of the homes received a key inspection and the remaining three homes received a random inspection. All the inspections were unannounced.
- 2.3 Previous reports to the Cabinet Member have detailed the outcomes of inspections up to October 2009.
- 2.2 The inspections are carried out under the statutory responsibilities given by the Care Standards Act 2000, and against the Outcomes for Children set within the Children Act 2004 and National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes. Consultation has recently been undertaken on these standards and the revised standards will be published later this year.
- 2.3 Inspectors gather evidence from a variety of sources, including a range of relevant professionals, children and staff within the homes and through the scrutiny of relevant documentation.
- 2.4 The full inspection reports give an overall judgment on the 'Every Child Matters' outcome areas (Be Healthy, Stay Safe, Enjoy and Achieve, Achieve Economic Well Being and Make a Positive Contribution) and that of Organisation. The unannounced inspections focus on any previous requirements and on the Every Child Matters outcome area of 'Stay Safe'.

2.6 The judgments are categorised under four criteria:

- **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 service provision is not good enough

2.7 Inspectors can make judgments as to whether requirements or recommendations are needed. A requirement is a mandatory action. A recommendation is a suggestion to improve current practice.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Children's Home 'A' was inspected on 8 February 2010. The overall rating was good.

Summary

This was a random inspection focusing on safeguarding. The inspector found it a good service with no requirements or recommendations regarding keeping children safe.

Within the report, the inspector stated that "good safeguarding policies and practice promote and protect young people's welfare" and made note that "staff recruitment practices are very good and checks are well recorded"

There were no new requirements or recommendations.

3.2 Children's Home 'B' was inspected on 14 January 2010. The overall rating was good.

Summary

This was a key inspection. The inspectors found it a "good service with some outstanding features".

Within the report, the inspector stated that "there are good child protection policies, training and practices which help to safeguard the welfare of the young people. The home was praised that "staff are particularly good at making sure that young people are looked after in a way that is particular to how they are and want to be". The way in which the home helps children achieve well and enjoy what they do was judged as 'outstanding', the inspector noting in particular how "education is a very high priority and it is vigorously promoted".

There were no requirements.

There were six recommendations which included; improving systems and the recording of the medication stocks, updates to some plans and routines within the home, ensuring all staff continue top work towards their NVQs and ensuring planned re-decorations take place. All these have been actioned or are ongoing.

- 3.3 Children's Home 'C' was inspected on 11 February 2010. The overall rating was good.

Summary

This was a random inspection focusing on safeguarding and the organisation of the home. The inspector found it a good service with no requirements regarding keeping children safe

Within the report, the inspector identified the access that young people have to the children's advocate as good practice and that "the protection of young people is given high priority". The inspector also noted that "the home is maintained and provides a safe environment for young people to live in".

There were no requirements.

There was one recommendation which was to ensure there was a note on a staff member's file of an employment gap some years prior to taking up the post. This has been actioned.

- 3.2 Children's Home 'D' was inspected on 28 January 2010. The overall rating was good.

Summary

This was a random inspection focusing on safeguarding. The inspector found it a good service with no requirements regarding keeping children safe.

Within the report, the inspector said that "young people said they feel safe in the home and staff talk to them about how to keep themselves safe". Note was also made of the use of the council's recruitment and selection policy in ensuring the safe recruitment of staff.

There were no requirements.

There were four recommendations. These included; ensuring the office door was closed when discussions were happening, re-siting the children's phone and a change in one form.

Summary of the inspection findings:

Outcome	A Home (A) (Random Inspection)	A Home (B) (Random Inspection)	A Home (C) (Random Inspection)	A Home (D) (Key Inspection)
Overall Judgment	Good	Good	Good	Good
Be Healthy	Not judged	Not judged	Not judged	Good
Stay Safe	Good	Good	Good	Good
Enjoy and Achieve	Not judged	Not judged	Not judged	Outstanding
Make a Positive Contribution	Not judged	Not judged	Not judged	Good
Economic Well-being	Not judged	Not judged	Not judged	Good
Organisation	Not judged	Good	Good	Good

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 These Inspections are final. The recommendations have been actioned. The ongoing practice in the homes continues to be monitored and reviewed through Regulatory visits to the homes, the Children's Homes' 'Fit Managers' meetings and Corporate Parenting visits to the homes by elected members.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 Financial

None

5.2 Staffing

None

5.3 Property

None

5.4 IT

None

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 – CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 Each home completes a Statement of Purpose which has to ensure it takes consideration of the child's individual needs.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

7.1 Observation of the children in the homes and how they relate to their carers plays an important role in the inspection process. The young people spoken by the inspectors said that – as in previous inspections - they feel safe in the homes and are able to express their views and any concerns.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the Children's Services Cabinet Member welcomes the outcomes of these inspections.

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

OfSTED Inspection Reports on the Children's Homes in North Lincolnshire – January 2010
– February 2010