

Mrs Margaret Mackechnie  
Nottingham City Council  
14 Hounds Gate  
Nottingham  
NG1 7BE

10th February 2006

**Our Ref:**  
**EC/LM/S59831/V275054**

**Commission for Social Care Inspection  
Care Standards Act 2000  
387 Woodborough Road, Mapperley, Nottingham,  
Nottinghamshire, NG3 5GX**

Dear Mrs Mackechnie

I am writing in relation to serious concerns that have been raised about the safety and care of the young people currently living at 387 Woodborough Road. I have been unable to visit the home today, but I have spoken with Mrs Sandra Brothwell who, as registered manager, has confirmed the following issues:

There are 7 young people currently placed at Woodborough Road, 5 of these young people are on remand and one on License. The majority of young people have been placed as emergencies and arrived with very little information about them. Some Looked After Children documentation has been left at the home, but details have been left blank. These poor arrangements give cause for concerns about how the manager and staff are able to draw up suitable plans for the care and safeguarding of these young people. Please refer to Children's Homes Regulations 2001 – **Reg 12.1 & 12.4(a)**

The dynamics of the group are very concerning and there are also serious concerns about the safety of individual children and of the group as a whole. Some young people have been previously placed at the home. All young people have a history of drug and alcohol use and all young people are using cannabis in the home. There are regular incidents relating to drug use.



All young people are constantly abusive and physically threatening to the staff.

There are consistent occurrences of criminal damage both within the home and the local vicinity.

A recent incident involving young people from outside the home has resulted in young people being under physical threat and danger from other young people not living at the home. Consequently, the staff not only have to contain the young people living at the home, but also local young people from the community.

The police are regularly attending at the home.

There is prolific bullying amongst the group. One young woman is three months pregnant and consistently bullies the other young people. The dynamics of the group would indicate that retaliation is imminent, thus putting the young woman and her un-born child at risk. Her bullying of the other young people has led to young people absconding and therefore presenting greater risk.

Two young people present mental health difficulties and both are being currently assessed by "Head to Head".

Four young people have a history of violent crime. One young man has been remanded on a charge of ABH after an assault on a police officer which resulted in a broken nose and eye socket.

This same young man consistently uses cannabis, hears voices, has decanted hairspray and deodorants into cups to drink from and at the time of this phone call had informed staff that he had swallowed half a razor blade, but was refusing to go to hospital. This young man has a history of self harm.

Another young woman, who is 15 years of age also self-harms and presents a significant threat to the other young people living at the home.



It seems that all the young people both as individuals and as a group present a variety of risks in terms of self harm and harm to each other. There are concerns that staff in the home are unable to meet all of the elements of **Regulation 16 (Arrangements for protection of children) and Regulation 11- (Promotion of welfare)**.

I am aware that the occupancy of the home increased to 7 young people on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2006 and an increase of staffing to 5 staff on duty was made on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February.

However, at least 50% of the staff are inexperienced, with less than 8 months working at the home and with little, if any, previous experience. Ms Brothwell has informed me that two experienced staff (one from Ranskill Gardens and another from Radford Bridge Road) are due to be transferred to the home. However, please could you confirm the arrangements to ensure that **Regulation 25 (Staffing of Children's homes)** is met.

The manager and staff are concerned about the safety of the young people at Woodborough Road. Sandra Brothwell informed me that a risk assessment had been carried out, but she was concerned that there were not enough resources in order to implement a risk management plan.

You are required to take immediate action to address these issues identified and to ensure the safety of all persons in the service.

Please let me have a written response by 17<sup>th</sup> February 2006 that details the action you will be taking in order to address these issues, including the timescale.



We will contact you to confirm that the issue has been addressed in a satisfactory way.

Please quote the above reference number on all correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Cray  
Regulatory Inspector

Nottingham Area Office

**DPA**

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