

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Chris Passmore
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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 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the *Inspections of children's homes – framework for inspection* (March 2011) and the evaluation schedule for children's homes.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: a service that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

Good: a service that exceeds minimum requirements

Satisfactory: a service that only meets minimum requirements

Inadequate: a service that does not meet minimum requirements

Service information

Brief description of the service

This service is provided by a private organisation. Children and young people using this service have emotional or behavioural difficulties. The service is registered to provide residential care and accommodation for one child or young person of either gender at any time. Staffing is provided according to the assessed needs of the young people accommodated.

Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is judged to be **good**.

This service is overall a good service with several individual aspects that are outstanding. The leadership and management of the service is strong. There are clear working practices that are based on individual risk assessments. The staff team is small but consistent in its membership and practice. This consistency contributes to positive achievements experienced by young people living in the service. These are especially marked in education and self confidence. Young people's individual needs are well known and planned for using realistic timescales. There are no weaknesses as such in the service provision; only time requirements to achieve further positive developments.

Areas for improvement

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for children and young people are **good**.

Young people make good progress and have positive outcomes as a result of the care provided at this service. Compared to their starting point they are able to improve and sustain excellent attendance in education. This enables them to develop their educational achievements in preparation for later life. Young people discover new skills and talents as a result of regular attendance in education. These lead to improved self awareness and self expression. Young people are given support and encouragement to live healthy lifestyles and to take responsibility for their personal wellbeing. The importance of these areas is sometimes slower to be realised and fully embraced by young people. Young people are enabled to maintain contact with significant individuals within their social and family groups. They are encouraged to develop appropriate relationships and supported through issues arising from their past. Young people can gradually increase their emotional stability together with an understanding of their background and development because of the individual attention.

Quality of care

The quality of the care is **outstanding**.

There is a small but consistent staff team who know the needs of the young people living in the home well. Staff provide consistent boundaries for young people to operate safely within, and to function well socially.

Where sanctions are applied, they are appropriate and young people make positive progress in these areas. For example, late rising by young people has been targeted and individual decision making and responsibility encouraged. This has led to an outstanding improvement in educational attendance and achievement. One of the latest reports describes the young person's progress as 'unprecedented' in one subject area. Behaviour is well managed by staff and there is no use of physical interventions.

Staff know the young people very well and offer individualised care based on assessed need. Staff are quick to recognise and encourage new skills and abilities. They maximise on these by creating new opportunities and experiences by which young people improve their self confidence and self-expression.

Staff encourage young people to take control of their own lives. They listen to their views, opinions and wishes and act on them appropriately. It is not always fully successful but staff are committed to keep on trying. Staff support young people to deal with sensitive issues and periods in their lives through the use of other professional agencies or bodies. Young people have the opportunity to discuss lifestyle issues with staff at any time or can use the professional services available to them.

There are robust arrangements in place to keep young people safe both within and outside of the service.

Safeguarding children and young people

The service is **good** at keeping children and young people safe and feeling safe.

There are good systems in place to protect young people and keep them safe either while in the home or away from it. Young people state that they feel safe in the home and know staff do their best to safeguard them. The incidence of anyone going missing from the home is rare but there are appropriate systems in place to safeguard young people as far as possible in that event. Positive behaviour is encouraged and well managed. Physical interventions are not used and the use of sanctions is limited, effective and understood by the young people. There are good links with other professionals responsible for safeguarding children and young people. Their involvement is appropriate to the level of need at any point in time. Health and safety within the home is well managed and all essential safety checks are in date.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the children's home are **good**.

The statement of purpose for the home is clear and the organisation meets the stated aims and objectives. Staff are successful in providing a stable and structured environment for young people. Care practices help young people to develop self awareness and provide them with opportunities to face individual issues in a safe, supportive environment. Young people have appropriate staffing according to their individual needs and level of development.

Staff understand young people's individual strengths and needs. There are consistent working practices which focus on enhancing young people's individual quality of life and potential. Staff are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and will support and develop young people's understanding in this regard.

Young people receive good positive care from a small but well supported staff team. Staff confirmed they have good training opportunities and there are regular supervision sessions. There are frequent opportunities and instances where informal discussion takes place with managers on care related issues. There is a free flow of information and ideas between staff and managers.

The relationship between staff, managers and young people is friendly and respectful. Managers have the welfare of young people and staff at heart and encourage them each to high achievement. Staff are committed to providing positive outcome opportunities for young people.

There are robust systems for monitoring already in place. The statement of purpose is regularly reviewed. There are monitoring visits made by the organisation and the manager makes monthly internal monitoring reviews. There is a development plan for the service which is realistic and practical. The recommendation made at the previous inspection has been acted on and records enhanced.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.