

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC004085
Inspection date	01/10/2012
Inspector	Brian Mcquoid
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	24/01/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is a short break residential home for children and young people with severe physical and/or learning disabilities. It is run by an independent not-for-profit organisation working to meet the needs of children with physical and learning disabilities. It is registered to provide care for up to seven children or young people at any one time. Day care is also provided.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: a service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

Good: a service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements

Adequate: a service that only meets minimum requirements

Inadequate: a service that does not meet minimum requirements

Overall effectiveness

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

The overall effectiveness of the service is good. Young people with a wide diversity of need enjoy their stays and receive a good quality of care from an enthusiastic and committed staff team who are suitably qualified and experienced. The welfare of young people is central to how the home operates and there is good provision for ensuring their safety and well-being at all times. Staff have a good understanding of safe working practices and are acutely aware of the individual needs of each young person. Parents and placing social workers have very good relationships with the service and hold it in high regard. High quality care planning effectively supports the delivery of care and successfully promotes positive outcomes for young people. School attendance is excellent and staff work very closely with parents and external professionals involved with young people. The manager of the home is very aware of the strengths of the service and there is a development plan which demonstrates a clear commitment to the continuing improvement for the benefit of young people. There are no breaches of regulations or failures to meet national minimum standards which have any adverse impact on the welfare of young people.

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Outcomes for young people accessing the service are good. They thoroughly enjoy their stays and have their needs very effectively met during their time there. School

attendance is excellent while young people are accessing the service and staff work closely with education personnel to ensure a consistency of approach to working with and addressing the needs of individuals. Young people successfully develop and sustain meaningful relationships with the staff who care for them. Parents feel totally confident that their children are being well cared for while staying at the home. Parents retain the primary responsibility for meeting their children's health needs, however the home very successfully addresses a wide range of specific health needs, of which some are complex. Working relationships with external agencies are extremely good and clearly benefit young people and the care they receive.

Seeking the views of young people is an integral aspect of how the home operates and is done either directly, or by parents advocating on behalf of their children. There is an acute awareness amongst staff of how each young person communicates and young people are provided with choices as much as possible during their daily lives. Staff successfully promote independence and support young people in their acquisition of life skills including communication and taking responsibility for their own personal care. There are lots of opportunities for young people to do things they enjoy doing, with a range of recreational activities available within the home and staff regularly supporting young people to access facilities within the community. The home is providing a respite service, however parents enjoy good lines of communication with staff and can contact or visit the home at any time during their child's stay.

Quality of care

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

Young people receive highly individualised care of a very good quality while accessing the service, and enjoy extremely positive relationships with the staff who care for them. The welfare of young people is central to how the home operates and staff are very good at communicating with and actively engaging young people. Comprehensive assessment and care planning processes successfully support the delivery of care and ensure that the varied and sometimes complex needs of each young person are addressed effectively. Young people are cared for in line with their individual plans and parents report feeling wholly involved in the planning of care for their child. The views of young people are obtained whenever possible according to their ability to communicate, with parents advocating on behalf of those with extreme communication difficulties. Choices are provided as much as possible in young people's daily lives by staff who are able to communicate effectively with them.

Staff work closely with external agencies and specialist services, such as behaviour support, occupational therapy, dieticians and other health professionals to ensure effective care is provided for young people. Individual protocols for emergency medication and individual behaviour support plans are examples of this. Staff are pro-active in seeking to work in partnership with young people's schools to achieve a consistency of care. Respite programmes are drawn up with careful consideration to the needs of each child and the compatibility of the group, with friendships also duly

considered. The home is well located for access to community facilities and the accommodation is comfortable with a homely feel to it. All young people have their own bedrooms while staying unless otherwise agreed to, and specialist equipment enables the effective delivery of care to those young people with specific needs relating to health or mobility.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

There is good provision for ensuring the safety and well-being of young people during their stays at the home. Parents and placing social workers report feeling very confident that young people are safely cared for while at the home and expressed no concerns at all in this area. Staff are very aware of the vulnerabilities of young people associated with their diverse and sometimes complex needs and act accordingly to ensure they are safe and protected from harm. Policies and procedures support and promote good practice with highly individualised care planning ensuring the delivery of appropriately safe care. Safeguarding training is provided regularly for all staff and there are close working relationships with the Local Safeguarding Children Boards. Provision for the management of risk is good and there have been no incidents of any young person being missing from the home. Individual risk assessments for all young people are comprehensive and are being subject to regular review.

The home provides a suitably safe and secure environment for young people. Suitable consideration is given to the compatibility of groups of young people accessing the service and bullying type behaviours are well managed so as not to prevent any significant risk to others. Staff adopt a positive and proactive approach to the management of behaviour and the use of sanctions and physical interventions are extremely rare. Individual behaviour support plans are devised whenever necessary and the home uses external specialist support in this area. Health and safety arrangements at the home are extremely good. Monthly inspections are carried out and recorded and annual audits by an external consultant reflect positively on how safety is ensured throughout the premises. Specialist equipment is serviced regularly, fire safety checks and tests are all up to date with fire evacuation practices being carried out as required. Recruitment procedures are being effectively implemented and provide adequate safeguards for the welfare of young people.

Leadership and management

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

Leadership and management of the service are good with a suitably qualified and experienced manager providing clear and effective leadership. Established operational systems are implemented effectively and the home operates smoothly on a day to day basis. The stated aims and objectives of the service are well met. Parents and placing social workers value the service highly with positive feedback received as a result of an annual survey of young people, parents, and placing

authorities carried out by the provider. 'I wouldn't change anything, I love (the home) the way it is' was one of a number of overwhelmingly positive responses.

One complaint had been received since the previous inspection. This had been thoroughly and satisfactorily addressed. Parents commented that staff respond promptly to any minor concerns that they have. The home has a good track record of addressing any requirements and recommendations arising from previous inspections, and demonstrates a clear commitment to continuing improvement with an on-going development plan in place. The home is adequately resourced and the physical environment is being maintained to a good standard.

Staffing is a real strength of the home with an enthusiastic and committed staff team receiving good quality training that enables them to meet the varied and complex needs of young people accessing the service. The staff group operate very effectively as a team and comment positively on the support they receive from each other and the home's manager. They have good quality supervision on a regular basis and their training and personal development needs are being well met. There are always sufficient staff on duty both day and night to meet the identified needs of young people, with an on-call duty system providing 24 hour managerial support. Staff at the home work very closely with both parents and external agencies involved with young people and contribute highly effectively to the reviewing process. Regulation 33 visits provide effective monitoring and report positively on how the home operates. Parents and young people are consulted as part of the process and reports are forwarded to Ofsted in a timely manner. Health and safety requirements are being well met and there is close and effective monitoring of individual young people's welfare and the operational systems supporting the delivery of care.

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.