

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Maureen Hamer
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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**.

Young people enjoy their time when having a short break in this caring home.

Staff listen to, and communicate with, young people and parents to gain a good understanding of the needs of young people and to ensure that their needs are well met. Parents feel that they can trust staff in this home to provide good quality care for their children and to keep them safe.

Young people are offered a range of activities inside and outside of the home to help them to enjoy their short break experience. Young people are well cared for and are kept safe. However the home's health and safety fire risk assessment has not been reviewed by the fire authority.

General hygiene in the home is good and staff are provided with training that promotes hand washing to reduce the spread of disease. However, some young people are particularly vulnerable to infectious diseases but their risk assessments do not identify this risk and actions to take to protect young people from harm.

Staff are provided with a range of training but some have not started to do the level three Diploma to ensure that basic competencies regarding caring for young people are met.

The manager completes good quality assurance monitoring and there is a six-

monthly evaluation of the service in place. The independent visitor also completes regular checks but they do not gain the views of young people and parents and are not always fully evaluative. This hinders gaining important views about the quality of care and objective scrutiny of the home.

Areas for improvement

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
32 (2001)	ensure that the local fire and rescue authority are satisfied with the precautions against fire, in particular as outlined in the homes health and safety assessment. (Regulation (32)(1))	07/09/2013

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that there is sufficient training on health and hygiene issues with a particular emphasis on communicable diseases (NMS 6.7)
- ensure staff working with young people hold, or are working towards, the level 3 Children and young Peoples Workforce Diploma within 6 months of confirmation of employment (NMS 18.5)
- include in the quality assurance monitoring, particularly Regulation 33 any serious incidents, allegations, complaints about the provision and the quality of the provision. Children in the home are regularly involved in contributing to monitoring the operation of the home, and their views and concerns are taken into account. (NMS 21.1)

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people with complex physical disabilities and learning difficulties develop positive and trusting relationships with staff. Young people have enjoyable short breaks in this relaxing environment and are making good progress.

The complex medical health needs of some young people are effectively managed. There is good partnership working between the home, specialist medical staff and

the school nurse. This contributes to effective support being provided to meet young people's health care needs. Good individualised moving and handling plans use pictures of how young people should be positioned to gain comfort and to avoid injury. This promotes staff's good understanding of the best positions for young people and successfully reduces the risk of breaking young people's frail skin.

Young people's communication methods are very well known to staff. Consequently frustration felt by young people is avoided or quickly resolved. Staff provide young people with choice in all aspects of their life such as in the activities that they want to do. This promotes positive relationships, promotes appropriate activities and reduces the incidence of challenging behaviour.

Young people's emotional well-being is promoted. Effective support and access to specialist services ensures that there is good assessment and appropriate care and treatment to promote positive behaviour.

Young people's nutritional needs are assessed. A varied and enjoyable diet is made available to promote positive health and weight. As a consequence of digestive problems some young people are on complex feeding regimes. Staff ensure that they are safely administered to promote young people's comfort and to provide the necessary nutritional input to maintain well-being.

Attendance at school is good. Young people have individualised targets that are consistent with educational targets such as promotion of communication skills and personal hygiene. This promotes a consistent approach and has a positive impact on maximising social skills and independence.

There is good communication between staff and parents who are the main carers for young people. Parents report that they feel that their young people have access to enjoyable activities. Access to a range of activities, such as the local leisure pool, is gained and this provides young people with a broad range of experiences.

Quality of care

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

Staff are good at developing positive relationship with young people and this promotes a happy home environment. Staff communicate with young people about all aspects of their care. This maximises young people's engagement in their daily routine and prepares them for activities and events in their day. Staff help young people to understand why some of their requests cannot be met and this successfully helps young people to trust staff.

Young people show good progress in going to school and enjoying school. Staff attend young people's education review meetings. There is good communication between settings to ensure continuity of care to support educational outcomes and positive behaviours.

Care plans are comprehensive and reflect the needs of young people and identify actions to meet those needs. Keyworkers ensure that each care plan is monitored for effectiveness. Staff report on the events that young people have engaged in on a daily basis and report their progress to appropriate partners such as parents and social workers. A parent said, 'I trust the staff here, that is so important.' A social worker commented that, 'there is confidence in staff's skills to provide good quality care to young people.'

Staff are improving the personalisation of young people's bedrooms in this short-break provision. Parents are asked to provide family photographs to enable staff to develop individualised boards to use in young people's bedrooms. This provides some physical link between the home and their family to promote a sense of homeliness and to help to reduce their anxiety when they are staying in the home.

Young people's medication regime is complex. Staff are provided with regular training to ensure that their knowledge and practice of administering medication is safe. There is a written record of all medication given to young people during their stay. Parents are provided with good information to ensure that there is good continuity on the provision of medicines to promote young people's health.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people are safe in this nurturing home environment. Staff act to promote young people's welfare.

Young people's behaviour management plans identify triggers to anxiety that lead to challenging behaviour. The plans identify effective actions to reduce young people's challenging behaviour and these are well understood by staff. Staff take effective and consistent action to de-escalate negative situations as a result physical restraint is rarely used and challenging behaviour is reduced.

Risk assessments are individualised and take full account of young people's physical disabilities. For example, some young people are unable to communicate discomfort and the need for constant supervision is required to ensure that they are safe. Some young people have epilepsy and staff are aware of early signs of a seizure occurring and are able to act to ensure young people are kept comfortable and safe. Levels of staff supervision required for young people are included in their assessments to ensure that young people are safe at all times.

Some young people are particularly vulnerable to contagious diseases. Staff are provided with training to ensure adherence general good hygiene, for example hand hygiene, and this is successful at managing the risk of cross infection. The organisation's policy has further guidance on infection control but the guidance is not being applied in the home. This shortfall has not negatively impacted on young people but some are at high risk of being negatively affected by infectious disease.

All incidents of restraint are sensitively and appropriately followed up with young people and staff. All incidents of restraint are accurately and clearly recorded. The manager is very effective at evaluating incidents of restraint and takes effective action to reduce challenging behaviour and use of restraint.

This provision has recently recruited a high number of staff to ensure that there is good supervision and care provided to young people. All staff are selected and vetted robustly to ensure that young people are cared for by suitably qualified adults.

Leadership and management

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

The management of this home is effective and efficient. The manager places the needs of young people at the centre of all that the home does and promotes continual improvement.

The Statement of Purpose states the aims and objectives of the service. This enables parents and placing authorities to understand how the service meets the needs of young people receiving short breaks. In addition there is a children's guide that provides information about the home to young people in an accessible format.

Staff feel valued and well supported. They receive regular supervision that is centred on the quality of care that they provide to young people. Staff report that training is of a good quality and enables them to reflect on and improve the care that they provide.

The provision has recently had a successful recruitment drive. This has increased the overall staffing numbers. There are always well-experienced staff on duty to supervise new staff and to ensure that ensure young people are well cared for. However some staff have not commenced a level three Diploma. This shortfall has not impacted on young people but means that those staff have not received all necessary training.

There is good monitoring of the quality of care and this includes input from young people. Management use monitoring information to improve staff's understanding of outcomes for young people. However, the independent visitor does not always gain the views of young people and the monitoring that is undertaken is not always fully evaluative. This reduces opportunities for the home to gain an objective view of its care and reduces objective scrutiny of care being provided to young people.

The management demonstrate good reflective evaluation of quality of care. There is a sufficiently detailed development plan in place that identifies the service's priorities; this is monitored for progress.

All personal records are comprehensive and stored securely. Statutory reviews are undertaken on a regular basis and the necessary documentation is gained from placing authorities prior to a placement taking place.

An up-to-date health and safety assessment is in place. As a result of the home's open stair way the assessment has a particular focus on the risk of fire and the potential impact this may have on young people. All young people have individualised fire risk assessments and in the event of a fire staff are aware of action to take, day or night, for each individual young person. Evacuation of the premises has been practiced during the day time and in dark conditions and evacuation times have been satisfactory. Fire prevention measures are reported to be good and include regular checks of equipment such as electrical wiring. All fire equipment is regularly checked and when faults are reported immediate action is taken to remedy the issue. The home has waking night staff so that there would be very early detection of any fire. The assessment also states that a six monthly fire assessment check will be undertaken. The organisation's health and safety assessor reports that due to the vulnerability of some young people this is to be done by the local fire service. However, as yet this has not yet occurred.

All significant events relating to young people are informed to relevant partners. A social worker stated that staff always report incidents to relevant partners. This effective communication ensures that events are assessed to ensure that effective action is in place to manage each situation.

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* and the evaluation schedule for the inspection of children's homes.