

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Trevor Hall
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is operated by a private organisation. It is registered to accommodate up to 10 young people with a range of disabilities, including physical disability, learning disability and complex needs. The provision may be for either settled care or short-breaks.

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 **outstanding**.

Young people experience excellent levels of care and support in this service. The effectiveness with which the setting provides personalised care is outstanding. Young people are treated with respect and dignity, and are central to all care planning and decisions that affect their lives. Parents, social workers and other stakeholders comment on the significant improvements and outcomes achieved by young people at this setting. Young people are offered a wonderful opportunity to develop social skills and personal development in a safe nurturing environment.

Staff actively encourage young people to express themselves, to make choices and to enjoy a full range of social opportunities and experiences, all of which promote outstanding outcomes. All aspects of care planning and practice are highly personalised. It is tailored to comprehensively meet the individual needs of each young person.

Staff are very committed and demonstrate a high level of skill and understanding which enables them to effectively meet the young people's complex needs. Staff have high aspirations for all young people and work strenuously to promote young people's personal growth, and social and emotional development. The home is well managed and offers a very safe and nurturing care environment.

Assessments of risk are, comprehensive and regularly reviewed, particularly those in respect of the home environment and young people's personal care needs. This

service is exceptionally well managed and staff are highly committed to improving the lives of young people, and enabling them to reach their full potentials.

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **outstanding**.

Young people in this home receive care in line with their assessed individual needs as identified in their care/short break care plan. The quality of care and support provided is outstanding. Extremely caring, and knowledgeable staff make every effort to ensure that young people are actively involved in the life of the home and that all their needs are met. Parents, schools, health professionals and social workers work very effectively to help young people with complex learning and physical disabilities achieve in all aspects of their lives. Relationships between staff and young people are excellent. Staff treat each young person with respect and dignity and it is clear that young people enjoy their care experience.

Highly motivated staff provide a warm and nurturing environment, which the young people find reassuring and supportive. Communication with young people is a key strength in this service. Staff work creatively and resourcefully identifying those methods that best meet individual needs. All young people accessing this service have their specific needs assessed, as part of an in-depth core assessment undertaken prior to admission. This ensures compatibility of needs and ensures that the young people are given every opportunity to enjoy their placement and make significant progress. Young people clearly benefit from a high level of continuity and support between their family, education placement and the home, enabling individual care needs and agreed targets to be met and often exceeded. Young people thrive and develop high levels of self-esteem, social identity and independence, within their levels of understanding and ability. Individual and group activities are both stimulating and life enhancing, helping young people to grow in confidence and self-reliance.

Specific and measurable targets are set for all young people with regular reviews. These targets identify areas in a young person's life which are achievable, and will greatly enhance their future independence and support needs. Young people play an active role in their transition plans communicating their views at all stages. This creates a culture that is fully committed to comprehensively meeting the young people's complex learning and physical disabilities.

Young people attend educational placements suitable to their individual learning and health needs, they have good attendance at school and make progress whatever their starting point. The home facilitates attendance and the home liaises consistently with all education providers, ensuring that communication is current and robust, and contributions are efficiently made to all care planning arrangements.

The home takes appropriate responsibility for the primary health care needs of the young people in long-term residency. For those using the home for short term respite care this remains the responsibility of parents and carers. Medication

procedures, administration, recording and storage are extremely robust. Very good procedures are in place for the receipt and return of medication accompanying respite young people at the start and end of each period of respite care. Good procedures, staff training and very clear record maintenance, ensure correct management of all medication and protection of young people's safety. All staff as part of their core training undertake a basic first aid course and only staff that have completed a suitable medication administration course are permitted to administer medication.

Quality of care

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

Young people receive an outstanding level of care. This ensures, whether they are full-time residents or young people enjoying a respite care visit, that they have a pleasant and rewarding experience. They are cared for by a dedicated and able staff team who genuinely care about them and who strive to ensure that every young person feels safe and is appropriately supported. Parents and social workers confirm that young people's well-being is central to the practice in the home and that a very high standard of personal care is provided.

Knowledgeable care staff, supported by detailed individual support plans, ensure that each young person's particular needs and individual preferences and interests are accommodated. This helps young people to settle quickly when on respite visits, combating separation anxieties for both the young people and their families and ensures that long-term residents feel valued and cared for. Young people enjoy very positive relationships with staff and other young people, which help them to feel safe and secure. This enables them to enjoy a wide variety of social experiences and peer interactions and helps them to improve their self-image and build up emotional resilience.

Care planning and risk assessment are good, both are reviewed regularly and are up to date. This ensures that staff have good up-to-date information about the young people in their care. The staff group provides the right balance between nurturing and enabling young people to develop appropriate self-reliance. Young people have their individual cultural, religious, language and racial needs effectively identified and addressed.

Young people's health is effectively safeguarded because there are clear policies and procedures that are consistently applied by a very motivated and well trained staff team. Excellent procedures are in place to receive record and store medication that comes in with a young person. Equally good procedures exist for the return of medication at the end of each stay at the home. Staff are vigilant in checking medication dispensed. This ensures accurate and up-to-date records, which evidence very safe practice.

Individual support plans are very detailed and specific to each young person. Staff, therefore, are aware of the diverse needs of the young people and ensure that they

are consistently met. Staff receive high levels of training in a variety of communication techniques and systems, enabling them to involve the young people in their care and to enable them to understand each child's needs.

Parents confirm that they are informed of the home's complaints system prior to the young person's first stay in the home. Details of how to raise issues of concern or make a complaint are also included in the parents' and young people's guide. Proper investigation and satisfactory resolution of all complaints ensures that parents have confidence in the home's complaints procedures.

Young people live in a bright, modern purpose-built home which provides sufficient space to meet their needs. The home is decorated to a high standard and young people have good quality furniture in their bedrooms and ample storage for personal clothes and belongings. The home enjoys good links to local facilities and has access to suitably adapted vehicles which means that young people have convenient and safe transport for activities.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people are safe, valued and respected at this home. Staff receive regular safeguarding training which ensures they have good up-to-date knowledge of current procedures, which gives them the confidence to make referrals when procedures dictate that they should. The home has made one safeguarding referral since the last inspection.

Risk assessments are in place for each young person; these cover behaviour management, the environment and issues relating to fire safety and evacuation. The home's risk assessments clearly identify all potential risks, and effective strategies are in place to minimise these risks. Young people's individual behaviour management plans give clear guidance to staff about managing harmful/anti-social behaviours. Change is encouraged using modelling, rewards and praise adding to young people's positive experience of the home. Staff have an appropriate awareness of bullying behaviour and the home has appropriate policies in this respect. Bullying is not an issue in this setting. Procedures for the reception, storage, administration and recording of medication in the home are excellent and meet all requirements and good practice guidance. First aid is included in mandatory training for all staff so they can deal promptly with young people's medical needs.

Staff are very clear about their responsibility to protect young people and provide a safe living environment. The inclusive caring culture of the home ensures that young people are respected as individuals. The careful selection, recruitment and retention of staff helps young people feel secure and to have a consistent team of staff that know them well.

The use of methods of control is fair and realistic and is limited to assisting young

people to stay safe. Physical intervention by staff is infrequent and is limited to ensuring that young people do not harm either themselves or others. Interventions are usually limited to staff safely guiding young people away from areas of high risk or from harmful situations.

The environment is physically safe and appropriately secure, taking account of the needs and characteristics of the young people cared for at the home. Fire safety is effective and well planned. Fire prevention, detection and retention devices are fitted throughout the building. External doors open automatically in the event of a fire allowing young people to safely leave the building. Drills are conducted regularly to ensure that both young people and staff are aware of the safe evacuation procedures. Periodic checks on fire alarms and portable fire fighting equipment are completed to the timescales set by the home's policies and regulations. The fire risk assessment is updated annually.

Leadership and management

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

The home's Registered Manager is suitably qualified and experienced and provides the home with strong, visible leadership which promotes an excellent quality of care and promotes positive outcomes for young people. Staff are well supported which means they provide outstanding care tailored to address the often complex individual needs of the young people in residence. Honest dialogue and supportive care help young people to develop new skills and to grow in confidence. The promotion of equality and diversity is exceedingly good.

The home has a clear accessible and comprehensive Statement of Purpose and young people's guide giving young people, their families and placing authorities comprehensive information about the services offered by the home. The home is well resourced, indicating the financial viability of the provider. The staff treat young people with the utmost respect and dignity and support them in overcoming significant and complex issues. The home has a very good complaints system which is clearly and effectively communicated to the young people and their parents and carers. The home has received only one complaint since it was last inspected, this minor in nature and was appropriately dealt with and successfully resolved.

Staff and social workers canvassed are fulsome in their praise for the Registered Manager and care teams commitment, drive and dedication. Young people receive excellent care from a professional, dedicated and stable staff team. The strong, visible management of the home positively promotes the ethos of care and all staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities. All staff members comment positively about the home's management team and the support they receive. Clear lines of accountability exist within the home, which enable a stable, consistent, safe and nurturing environment to be maintained. The staff team is well informed and understand their roles and responsibilities. Consistent and regular supervision, coupled with team meetings, provide staff with good opportunities to discuss their role, their professional development and the impact that working with children with

complex needs has upon them. The home keeps sufficient staff on duty at all times to meet the young people's identified needs.

Staff training is excellent. There are regular opportunities for all staff to complete mandatory training and high levels of specialist training are a key feature of this service. Staff feel the management team fully supports personal and professional development and supervision arrangements are robust and highly effective. Staff comments indicate that this is an exceptional environment to work in, with excellent supports to develop as individuals and as a team.

Staff have a strong focus on promoting positive outcomes and to enhance the well-being of the young people in their care. They work proactively to help young people overcome barriers and to succeed. Good communication between staff ensures that young people's individual needs are consistently met. Staff ensure that a safe, secure and nurturing environment is maintained which assists young people to feel safe and to enjoy living in the home.

The Registered Manager has established rigorous internal quality assurance monitoring systems. It is clear that she checks all reporting systems regularly and comments if any record fails to meet either the home's policies and procedures or national regulations. Regular internal monitoring reports are produced which help the home to develop its practice and ensure that young people are receiving the care and support they need. Regular external monitoring visits take place to provide additional quality assurance mechanisms and these involve consulting young people wherever possible. The homes management team have a strong commitment to meeting young people's needs. The level of development and progress made by young people, whether those in full time care or those accessing the respite provision, is a testament to the impact the managers have made .

The home has comprehensive development plans for continuing improvement based upon its track record, continual staff training and ensuring that the physical environment is maintained to a high standard. All significant events relating to the protection of young people accommodated in the home are notified by the registered person to the appropriate authorities and appropriate action is taken following the incident; this ensures the safety of young people.

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.