

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC005041
Inspection date	23/05/2012
Inspector	Jacqui Gosling
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	12/01/2012
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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 that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

Good: a service 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 service has good quality systems in place which promote the welfare of young people and ensure they develop to their full potential. The service achieves good outcomes for young people who have all made some progress through the outstanding quality of care provided.

Young people benefit from a caring and dedicated staff team who understand the need for attention to equality, diversity and inclusion in providing a service. Care is provided in close consultation with parents, young people and other involved professionals. Young people make good use of community activities to support their development and to encourage interaction with peers. The management understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home and has a detailed development plan in place to support changes which will benefit young people.

Monitoring reports completed by the manager and Regulation 33 visitor have been provided to Ofsted. This ensures independent checking of the quality of care the young people are receiving.

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people are helped to develop a positive self view, they are valued and given lots of opportunities to enjoy different experiences. There are pictures of young people around the home, personalised bedroom doors and bedrooms giving them a

sense of belonging and value.

All young people benefit from contact with family members. Parents, family, carers and friends are invited into the home and some children spend time in the community in accordance with their care plans. The staff are effective in supporting the practical arrangements, such as setting up visits, and support with travelling arrangements. A particular strength of the home is the work in partnership with parents and helping to build supportive relationships.

The staff have high expectations for young people whatever their starting point. Attention is paid to building confidence and self esteem by treating each as a unique individual, building on strengths and trying to overcome difficulties.

Young people have good attendance at school and make progress whatever their starting point. Recognising the limits of young people's complex health needs, staff encourage them to lead healthy lifestyle by creatively encouraging them to be active and encouraging them to have a healthy diet.

Health needs are met well. Young people have prompt access to doctors and other health professionals. Staff who are involved in delivering therapeutic interventions have appropriate training and expertise. This ensures that the care provided is effective in meeting the young people's complex health needs.

Activities are promoted and supported, enabling young people to be positively engaged in the local community, for example, by attending the local choir. Young people moving on from this service will need continuing support into adult life and staff ensure transitions into adult services are sensitively managed. Young people are helped to develop a positive self view, they are valued and given lots of opportunities to enjoy different experiences. There are pictures of young people around the home, personalised bedroom doors and bedrooms giving them a sense of belonging and value.

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Quality of care

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

Staff have consistently high aspirations for and talk positively about young people, which encourages self esteem and emotional resilience. They understand the needs of each young person which are clearly identified in detailed care plans, agreed by parents and placing authorities so that all parties are clear about responsibilities and expectations.

Regular reviews of progress on all issues ensure that improvement is continuous and the potential for development for each young person is maximised. Young people benefit from comprehensive individualised programmes of intervention which address where required specific issues such as challenging or socially unacceptable behaviour. Staff are proactive in using positive rather than negative measures of control.

Relationships between staff and young people are notably caring and built on mutual respect. Young people also get on well with one another and can spend time together; they also have plenty of space and a variety of rooms available to spend time in, alone or with staff.

High staffing levels allow individual time to be spent with young people, to attend to their personal needs and to help young people enjoy activities.

Young people benefit from attendance at school or college and staff support attendance by providing transport and supporting in school where needed. Good communication between education providers and the home allow for any issues to be addressed quickly, and maximises development which can be shared and encouraged in both environments.

Young people have access to services which meet their emotional, physical and psychological needs. Staff are proactive in finding imaginative ways to support young people to improve emotional well-being, for example, dancing, jewellery box or playing keyboard. There are a number of outings and holidays organised.

The staff take innovative action to remove barriers to participation and belonging for all. They do this through symbol prompts and use of other communication systems

specific used by young people.

Young people or the person with parental responsibility are given information in appropriate formats detailing how to make a complaint, and all young people have an independent advocate as an additional supporter who will act on their behalf.

The staff help young people to understand and appreciate the diversity of society. Difference is celebrated and there are posters around the home which encourage this. In addition young people benefit from cultural days where different foods are tried and traditions, cultural dress and customs are explored.

The views, wishes and feelings of young people are taken into account in the running of the home and they have been consulted about all the recent redecorating, new furniture and fittings. In addition choice is encouraged in personalising bedrooms, food, toiletries and clothing.

The home is situated close to a town centre with easy access to community resources. It is spacious, homely and well maintained and decorated. The large garden has plenty of space for ball games and play equipment. There are many resources, including games, toys, specialist sensory equipment, several televisions. Young people also benefit from holidays as well as days out to the seaside and places of interest.

Fun days are provided and young people can invite friends, parents and siblings, as well as those providing support services. These provide opportunities for young people to take part in competitions, sports and to show people where they live and the achievements they have made.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people appear safe in the home and are protected from unnecessary risk through the use of detailed risk assessments and the diligence of staff. A counter-bullying policy is in place; a good child staff ratio and the identification and understanding of triggers to behaviour reduces incidents and protects young people.

Behaviour management plans identify the particular vulnerabilities of young people and any problematic behaviour; systems are then put in place to manage and change unacceptable behaviour. Care plans can be shared with schools and parents to reinforce positive changes in all aspects of young people's lives. Change is encouraged using modelling, rewards and praise adding to young people's positive experiences in this home.

There is minimum use of restraint in this home, restraints amount to a brief hold and an escort; both are appropriate and fully recorded. Staff are trained in the use of restraint to safeguard young people and to prevent them from harming themselves or others.

Regular health and safety checks ensure that young people are protected from accidental harm. Fire prevention, detection and retention devices are fitted throughout the building and external doors will open automatically in the event of a fire allowing young people to safely leave the building.

A well-trained staff team who can identify issues of abuse or neglect and can respond appropriately, protects young people. First aid is included in mandatory training for all staff so they can deal with young people's medical emergencies.

Young people do not go missing from this home and would not be safe out on their own. They are protected from being able to leave the building without staff knowledge.

Visitors to the home are carefully vetted to avoid inappropriate people having access to young people in their home. Staff working in the home are also subject to careful vetting and checking procedures to avoid unsuitable people being recruited and having access to vulnerable young people or place them at risk.

Leadership and management

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

Young people benefit from a home that is well managed by a confident and experienced management team who keep up to date with new legislation and practice developments. This is shared with staff to improve the quality of service. The senior support staff are also dedicated and enthusiastic and have the support of well-trained staff, the majority of whom have a professional qualification. The Registered Manager has enrolled on a management training course in order to obtain a relevant management qualification. Young people gain from a staff team who are supported by regular team meetings and individual supervision which allows them to explore any issues and reflect and improve upon practice.

Young people flourish in this warm, welcoming and friendly environment. The needs of young people are at the core of the service provided and all attempts are made to meet the diverse range of needs and enable young people to make the most of their time living or staying for short periods in this home.

There is a clear complaints procedure although there have been no complaints since the last inspection. The home receives lots of compliments from parents and social workers regarding the care and support offered to young people. A parent commented: 'I can now sleep at night knowing my child is getting excellent 24 hour care'.

Managers understand the strengths and weaknesses of the service and have kept up to date with recent changes in legislation. A development plan is in place to continuously improve the service and incorporate legislative changes to benefit young people.

The Statement of Purpose is accessible and clear about the aims and objectives of the service. Young people's guides are also available in different formats so that they are useful for helping all young people in understanding what to expect and accurately reflect the service offered.

Regular monitoring of the home takes place through Regulation 33 visits and reporting. The manager completes monitoring and any identified issues are dealt with to improve the care of young people. Ofsted receives Regulation 33 and 34 reports as required. These independent quality assurance systems are designed to protect young people.

Previous requirements and recommendations have been fully addressed. The staff now ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, or restraint, a written record is kept for the purpose, including the prescribed details. This relates to both resident young people and those receiving short term care.

The home now has a clear Statement of Purpose which is available to and understood by staff and children and reflected in any policies, procedures and guidance.

To ensure the views of the child, the child's family, social worker and Independent Reviewing Officer are sought regularly on the child's care the manager now sends out questionnaires. There has been an excellent response to these first questionnaires.

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.