

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC008270
Inspection date	28/11/2012
Inspector	Michelle Spruce
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	13/02/2012
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2012

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

Care is provided for two young people of either sex who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. A private company owns and operates this setting.

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**.

This outstanding service is exceptional at keeping young people safe. The key strength lies within a dynamic, consistent and dedicated staff team lead by a strong and highly motivated manager. The staff take full account of the highly personalised and extremely well-planned care that effectively achieves outstanding outcomes.

The quality of relationships between staff and young people are a key strength. The excellent support invested in young people is professional, respectful and trusting, thus promoting mature and honest relationships. The success achieved is demonstrated through highly effective placement planning and effective consultation with young people who significantly influence the running of the home.

The management of the home provides dedicated leadership that proactively strives to improve the service through rigorous monitoring and evaluation.

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make exceptional progress from their starting points in relation to further education and employment because they are committed, fully focused and want to succeed. Young people secure college placements and work opportunities because they are successful in achieving excellent qualifications that improve their life chances. This means young people grow more confident and aspire to achieve their aspirations.

Young people recognise the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and are proactive in taking steps to reduce certain activities that adversely affect them, such as smoking. Young people choose to access activities that enhance their physical well-being and improve their fitness. Young people benefit from a diverse range of health support agencies and make and attend appointments independently. As a result, young people thrive and remain fit and well.

Young people remain in contact with friends, family and others significant to them. Young people benefit from overnight stays with friends which means they continue to live their lives in the same way as their peers. This means young people form strong bonds and relationships.

Young people understand their backgrounds and have an excellent sense of identity because they engage with staff and external professionals to explore their life story. As a result, young people's self-esteem and confidence significantly improves.

Young people achieve successful outcomes regarding independence because they have individual plans that promote skills necessary for moving on. Young people have a weekly budget to buy food, clothing and essential items. This helps them to manage their finances and provides opportunities to develop skills in good housekeeping. As a result, young people make excellent transition into independence smoothly and successfully.

Quality of care

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

Young people live in a nurturing, warm and welcoming home where relationships between peers and staff are important and very respectful. Staff unquestionably place young people central to the care they provide. A social worker said, 'The staff are brilliant and go the extra mile.' The quality of care that young people receive is outstanding because staff place young people central to the care they provide. A young person said, 'Relationships are strong and you can express your emotions. Staff are positive role models and relationships are excellent; this helps the bond.'

Staff ensure that young people are central and consistently involved in their care planning and review. Placement plans are of a high quality and individually tailored to meet young people's needs. Staff proactively encourage young people's participation in the review of their placement plans. This ensures young people continually receive a high quality of care.

Young people feel a part of the home because they actively participate in meetings and freely express their views and opinions. The manager meets most requests young people make and negotiates compromise where requests cannot be met. Staff embrace and recognise the need to respect young people's choices and enable and empower their decision making. This means young people significantly influence the home and take pride in their environment.

Staff promote excellent relationships with their neighbours. Young people make strong links and positive relationships with the community. Staff are proactive in promoting the cultural and religious needs of young people where the care plan indicates specific preferences. Staff explore a diverse range of subjects that allow young people to understand and accept others differences. As a result, young people learn how to respect and value the diversity of others.

Staff effectively support young people to report concerns or grumbles and young people understand how to raise complaints or concerns. Young people have access to independent advocacy services. This promotes the rights of young people.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Staff consider the safety of young people paramount. Young people say they feel safe in the home because they are comfortable and trust the staff, knowing they have their best interests at heart. Staff make young people's safety a priority because they continually assess, monitor and evaluate risks that have a potential to impact on young people's safety. Staff work exceptionally close with the police and other external professionals to safeguard young people from harm. This keeps young people safe.

Young people confirm incidents of challenging behaviour have significantly reduced and physical intervention is not used because staff implement clear boundaries and fair sanctions. Young people do not engage in risk-taking activities because of positive role modelling demonstrated by staff coupled with highly effective boundaries and continuity of care. As a result, episodes of young people going missing from the home reduce significantly, offending does not occur and young people stay safe.

Staff are vigilant in their approach to recognising and reporting any safeguarding concerns because they are trained and skilled in child protection. Where there are concerns for young people, staff work effectively to put strategies in place to prevent harm or exploitation. Staff take advice from the Local Safeguarding Children's Board to ensure the appropriate action is taken in the event of safeguarding issues.

Staff respect young people's privacy and young people confirm staff always knock their bedroom doors before entering. Young people have their own bedroom keys which protects their privacy and dignity.

The home is very well presented and provides a warm welcoming environment. Regular checks are completed in line with health and safety requirements. Young people take part in fire drills and understand their responsibilities in keeping their own room as well as the home free from hazards and risk. This means young people live in a safe environment.

Leadership and management

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

The home is extremely successful because the team is managed by a dedicated Registered Manager who is passionate about the delivery of exceptional quality of care and improved outcomes for young people. The manager is supported by a professional and skilled work force. The manager is highly respected by her team which supports the commitment invested in the service. Young people love the staff and feel the home runs well because the staff are caring, dedicated and loyal.

Staff have excellent relationships with the manager built on trust over a continuous period of time. Staff receive excellent support on a day-to-day basis from the manager, through team meetings, supervision and appraisal. Young people thrive in a successfully well-managed home where the focus is on providing a child-centred service where care is delivered with passion. Staffing levels are appropriate; effective planning ensures young people's needs are met. Staff say, 'We have good handovers that ensure the home continues to run well and the staff work extremely hard to maintain continuity of care because the rota allows staff to work shifts that are arranged to meet the young people's needs.'

The home is monitored in relation to the Regulation 33 visits which provide a detailed overview of the service. The manager effectively monitors and evaluates the home by completing a regular quality assurance monitoring review. As a result, the home has a robust development plan in place that outlines the key strengths and weaknesses. This means objectives set are met within timescales and action is taken to implement change where there are shortfalls.

Records in the home are kept and maintained to a high standard, providing confidentiality of sensitive information. Staff take care to protect information and keep records stored in lockable cabinets in a locked staff office. This means only authorised personnel gain access to young people's records.

Young people thrive in an environment that is maintained to a high standard. The home is welcoming, excellently presented and cared for. Young people and staff show a high regard for the environment they live and work in and take great pride in maintaining it to a high standard.

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 children's homes.