

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Caroline Jones
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This is a private children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to nine young people with physical disabilities and emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. There are two homes covered by a single registration.

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 live in a good home where they receive high quality care. This supports them in making good progress across all aspects of their development. Young people report that they feel safe and enjoy living at the home. They comment: 'This is my home, we are like a family, I feel safe, staff have my back.' Staff continue to have high aspirations for young people and are committed to ensuring they succeed. They champion young people's needs and rights to ensure they gain the advice and support required to reach their potential.

Young people are central to care planning and regularly complete, review and sign their placement plans. This ensures their involvement and understanding of decisions about their lives. Staff know young people very well and have forged trusting relationships with them, consequently they remain settled in the home. Furthermore, the core staff team remains stable which provides consistency for young people.

The home is effectively managed with a strong emphasis on providing high standards of care. Internal and external monitoring systems are in place to scrutinise the quality of care, although Regulation 33 reports are completed these are not always forwarded to HMCI. Anti-discriminatory practice runs through all aspects of the day-to-day care and young people understand their background and identity. A further shortfall is identified in relation to clearly recording information, to ensure that this is accurately dated for young people's access in the future.

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
33 (2001)	ensure that copies of the report completed in accordance with the regulation are forwarded to HMCI. (Regulation 33 (5)(a))	25/10/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure that information about young people is clearly and accurately recorded. (NMS 22.5)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people achieve good outcomes across all aspects of their development which helps them grow in confidence. Staff promote young people's independence and they are encouraged to take appropriate risks and responsibility for their age and understanding. They are involved in the daily running of the home and staff work with them individually through direct work sessions to build resilience and self-esteem. These practices help equip young people with the skills and competence for adulthood.

Young people benefit from effective and consistent health care. They are registered with medical practitioners and have detailed plans to meet their health needs. Young people are educated in a variety of health and wellbeing matters, including sexual health, drug and alcohol misuse. Furthermore, individual direct work sessions complement young people's learning to ensure they have the knowledge to make informed decisions. Young people are involved in planning the menus and are developing an understanding of healthy nutrition and lifestyles. Medication is stored and administered safely and records are maintained and monitored. Staff receive suitable training to support health and wellbeing and have a first aid qualification to ensure safer caring of young people.

Young people's attendance and progress at school is good which is underpinned by the constructive relationships staff have made with educational professionals. Young people are encouraged to learn at home and staff assist them with their homework and attend parents evenings to support and encourage young people's success. Individual school reports, for some young people, highlight exceptional progress

including young people achieving above their expected targets.

Young people benefit from contact with their families and overnight stays, which maintains links and relationships with those significant to them. This also contributes to young people's understanding of their identity and heritage. Individual contact plans are in place with local authorities to ensure young people's contact is safe, enjoyable and positive. Furthermore, staff are knowledgeable of the emotional impact of contact upon young people and ensure that they are sensitively supported.

Quality of care

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

Young people continue to grow in a stable, nurturing and supportive environment. Young people comment: 'I feel safe and cared about, staff care about us more than they do themselves.' Young people enjoy positive relationships with staff that have an excellent understanding of their individual needs. Detailed care planning and proactive relationships with partner agencies contributes to the quality of care received by young people.

Young people are involved in the daily running of the home and their views are sought and responded to regularly. For example, at the request of young people the deputy manager is implementing an individual activity planner with them. Young people know how to raise a complaint and feel confident to do so. They comment: 'I say if I'm not happy, but I have had nothing to complain about, if I did I would just say, it would get sorted.' Young people have regular contact with independent visitors and children's rights workers to promote their views further. These practices empower young people to have control in their own daily lives.

Young people live in a healthy environment where their physical, emotional and social wellbeing is promoted. They engage in physical and social activities with friends and have easy access to health care services to meet their individual needs. Young people take part in activities such as gymnasium, boxing classes, horse riding and visiting the pool hall. Young people are encouraged to pursue their individual beliefs and a range of events are available to promote young people's understanding of diversity. Young people assist to prepare the home's menu and food to encourage their understanding of nutrition and cultural traditions.

Young people live in comfortable and homely accommodation that blends into the neighbourhood. The home is clean, decorated and furnished to a good standard. Young people have their own bedrooms that are personalised and reflect their interests. Plans are currently underway to redecorate young people's bedrooms due to them changing bedrooms. They have space and privacy to see family and friends and to do their homework. This affords respect and dignity to young people.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people are effectively safeguarded and feel safe from harm. Staff receive safeguarding training and have a good understanding of their duties in promoting young people's welfare. Staff policies and procedures are in place to ensure a robust response to any allegation or disclosure of abuse. Constructive and warm relationships between staff and young people and consistent boundaries provide the basis for managing behaviour successfully. As a result restraints are rarely used. Methods such as incentives and consequences encourage young people's participation. They comment 'I think they are firm but fair.' Young people's engagement in the process ensures that sanctions are appropriately used and assists them to accept responsibility for their actions. Young people are encouraged to behave appropriately and risk taking behaviours, such as young people missing from home has reduced over time.

Young people live in a physically safe environment in which health and safety matters are fully considered to protect them. Written records clearly show that staff carry out routine health and safety checks around the home. Safety and insurance certificates are up-to-date and regular fire drills take place to ensure young people and staff are aware of an emergency evacuation route in the event of a fire. Staff are vigilant and take appropriate steps to verify visitors identity to ensure the safety of young people.

Young people benefit from an experienced and suitably qualified staff team. An improved recruitment process, Criminal Records Bureau and reference checks are all undertaken before any appointment of staff is made. Young people are also involved in the interviews of potential staff to ensure their views count in the decision making process.

Leadership and management

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

Young people live in a home that is effectively managed in their best interests. The service meets the aims and objectives of the Statement of Purpose and young people, staff and social workers are clear about the aims and facilities of the home. The Registered Manager and deputy manager provide clear leadership and accountability and work closely with staff and young people to ensure the smooth running of the home.

Young people's care is scrutinised through quality assurance systems which include monthly management monitoring which highlights trends to learn and improve practice. Visits by a designated person in accordance with regulation take place, although these have not always been received by HMCI. All significant events relating to young people are notified to the relevant authorities and appropriate action is taken to protect them. The management team are well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and requirements and recommendations have been addressed. Developmental plans are ongoing and show a commitment to young people for improvement.

Staff are very well supported by a management team who are hands-on and open in their expectations of quality care. Staff are suitably qualified and the team remains stable which provides consistency and predictability for young people. They have induction, regular supervision, appraisals, team meetings and training opportunities that contribute to their competence in providing good care to young people. Staff confirm that the management team are available to them and that they enjoy the work they do.

Staff have a thorough understanding of their roles and responsibilities and have high expectations for young people. They understand young people's individual strengths and needs and encourage them to reach their potential. Recording of information is generally good and provides a picture of young people's daily lives. However, accuracy of recording is not always achieved, for example the dates in an incident report did not correspond with other documentation. Young people's information is securely stored and shared confidentiality to protect their safety and privacy.

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.