

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC008486
Inspection date	17/08/2011
Inspector	Anthony Kyem
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	07/01/2011
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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.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: a service that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

Good: a service that exceeds minimum requirements

Satisfactory: a service that only meets minimum requirements

Inadequate: a service that does not meet minimum requirements

Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is registered with Ofsted to provide care and accommodation for up to six young people on a medium to long-term basis in preparation for foster care, rehabilitation home with family, or independent living. The home is privately owned.

Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is judged to be **outstanding**.

Young people report that they live in a safe, nurturing and supportive environment. Young people are extremely positive about the quality of their care and relationships between young people and staff, are a strong and impressive feature of this home. Young people say, ' I love living here. The staff are really nice, their helpful and supportive and I get along with all the other kids...The one thing I will really remember about living here is that staff have been really supportive and they're always there for me.' It is evident from speaking to young people that they are extremely settled and they thoroughly enjoy living at the home.

Young people receive high levels of support from caring and enthusiastic staff, who respect them as individuals and promote their needs very effectively. The registered manager routinely monitors the quality of young people's care to ensure that their outcomes are positive. Young people's views are regularly ascertained and they are central to how the operates, which enables them to have a positive influence in decisions made within the home. One young person says, ' This is the first care home I've been in. I can't imagine being anywhere else...They've helped me with everything I need and there's never a moment that you feel alone...I would give it outstanding as it's so good...I don't want to be anywhere else...Everyone's really close, everyone gets on with each other.'

Two areas have been identified for development. These relate to the use of sanctions and pathway plans.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that sanctions used by staff are clear, reasonable, fair and effective (NMS 3.8)

- ensure eligible care leavers have a pathway plan (NMS 12.2).

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make excellent progress in relation to their individual starting points. Staff work enthusiastically to ensure young people's outcomes are positive and their needs are promoted effectively. Staff have high expectations of the young people they care for and they actively support young people with their education, to promote their educational achievement. Young people develop their self-confidence and they become confident and capable learners because of the support provided to them, by dedicated staff.

Young people are very well treated and cared for. They receive high levels of personal support, in accordance with their identified needs. This enables young people to make substantial progress. There is a positive approach towards promoting young people's good health, which encourages young people to lead a healthy lifestyle. Young people have access to dentists, doctors and opticians to promote their positive health.

Young people are provided with a broad range of activities to develop their individual interests. Young people say they enjoy these activities. Young people develop their social skills and they make friendships as result of such experiences. Young people benefit from the individualised support provided to them and they learn to cope with past experiences. With extensive support, young people learn to develop their, self-esteem, self-confidence and emotional resilience. The services the home provides for young people promotes continuity of care and this enables young people to develop trust and develop high quality relationships.

Young people have a designated key worker to act as their principal supporter. Staff ensure that young people have access to the support they require, to enable their needs to met comprehensively. Young people are well supported with contact, to help them sustain their valued relationships with their families and friends. Young people are supported to prepare for life within the adult world. Staff provide advice and support to develop young people's life skills. The home has requested pathway plans from young people's personal advisors to promote young people's needs; however these have not been received yet..

Quality of care

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

Staff are extremely effective at building positive relationships with young people and as a result, young people have developed a strong sense of belonging. Young people feel valued and accepted as individuals, having formed close relationships with staff. One young person says, ' I have to say it's the best place I've lived in, yeah

definitely...I can't really explain, it's weird. They're not like random people. It's like a family.'

High quality relationships underpin the extent to which consultation between young people and staff is purposeful. Young people are regularly consulted and this enables them to have a positive influence in running of the home. Young people know how to complain but they have not made any complaints since the previous inspection.

The objectives of young people's placements are clearly outlined within their placement plans, to show what young people and staff are working towards. Young people's placement plans are comprehensively completed to show staff, how young people's needs will be met on a day to day basis. Staff implement young people's plans very effectively and this promote their positive outcomes.

Young people's needs as individuals are fully considered in relation to ethnicity, culture and religion to promote their diverse needs and social backgrounds. Staff have an excellent knowledge of the young people they are working with and this ensures young people's needs are met consistently.

The home's design, size and location meet young people's needs. The home provides young people with a comfortable, safe and homely place for them to live, where young people's health, welfare and safety is promoted effectively. The home has a relaxed atmosphere and young people say they are extremely happy living here. Young people are not stigmatised by their physical surroundings, as the home is not distinguishable as a children's home.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

The safety and protection of young people is a high priority of the home. At the same time young people are allowed to take controlled risks, as part of their independence. As a result, young people are protected whilst able to enjoy their freedom and independence. Young people report they feel safe and they are kept safe.

Young people say there are no issues with bullying within the home. Staff are trained in child protection to enable them to recognise and report suspected abuse. Young people are actively protected from abuse, bullying and exploitation and staff are trained to keep young people safe from harm.

Agreed protocols are followed by staff to promote young people's safety and encourage their safe return when young people are missing. However, sanctions used as a deterrent towards unauthorised absence are not effective, as they have little impact. Sanctions are not reviewed effectively to ensure those used have a positive influence. Rewards are used very effectively to promote socially acceptable behaviour.

Young people live in a safe and highly supportive environment. Young people enjoy extremely positive relationships with staff and with each other. Positive behaviour is promoted and the use of restraint is exceptionally rare. Young people live in a safe environment, which is free from potential hazards to their safety.

Leadership and management

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

Young people live in a home that is managed efficiently and effectively. Management arrangements are clear, so there are clear levels of accountability. Staff work hard to meet the aims and objectives of the home, so that young people receive and enjoy a high standard of quality care. The home has a written development plan, which demonstrates the home's capacity for continued improvement.

Robust quality assurance systems ensure the home's performance is monitored effectively, to secure the smooth operations of the home. The home has a proven track record of high performance and there are no requirements or recommendations from the previous inspection.

There is a positive commitment towards staff training, supervision and development. Staff benefit from high quality training which is relevant to their roles. This enables staff to develop their knowledge and skills to work with young people in a way that supports their positive outcomes. All staff have completed National Vocational Qualification training and this ensure young people are looked after by staff who are appropriately qualified and skilled.

Young people receive continuity of care and this enables them to form positive relationships with staff, who are knowledgeable and familiar with their needs and individual routines. The home has sufficient staff employed from diverse backgrounds to promote young people's needs and provide them with strong and influential role models.

Equality and diversity practice is **outstanding**.