

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Anthony Kyem
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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.

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 benefit from well-planned care that promotes their needs effectively. Young people make positive progress and this is evident across most aspects of their care, development and welfare. There are some young people who need additional support to promote their physical, emotional and psychological well-being. Staff ensure young people are kept safe and feel safe.

Young people benefit from excellent relationships with staff and with each other. Young people say, 'I love it here because the staff are really helpful. They encourage you and they really care. They're dead supportive. No kid likes rules, but the rules are sensible rules to keep us safe. When I first came here I went missing all the time as I didn't want to be here. Then I got to know the staff and the other kids...Yes, I feel safe. There's a lot of love here.'

Young people's views about the quality of their care are extremely positive. Their views and opinions are taken seriously and they feel involved in the running of the home. One young person says, 'I am still very happy here. I'll be here next year and the year after that, no doubt about it. I've no reason to complain, there's nothing to complain about. It's a good atmosphere here, the staff are good, it's a good house, it's all sweet.'

Another young person says, 'Everyone's trying to help me. They want me to achieve my goals.'

As a result of this inspection, there are a small number of recommendations made to

help improve the outcomes for young people. These relate to improving the current arrangements for some young people to have contact, accessing specialist support to help young people who require it, providing better support to ensure young people attend their routine health appointments and engaging all young people in positive activities.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure young people have access to specialist support, where appropriate, to promote their physical and emotional well-being (NMS 6.9)
- encourage and support young people to develop and pursue their particular interests and hobbies (NMS 7.2)
- ensure young people are supported to maintain constructive relationships with their families (NMS 9.1)
- ensure the home contributes to the development of a pathway plan for eligible care leavers (NMS 12.2)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people are actively encouraged and supported to attend school or alternative provision. Those who have left school are actively encouraged to attend further education, apprenticeships or training. As a result, young people benefit from the positive opportunities made available for them to learn and achieve. Young people receive good support to pursue and achieve their individual aspirations and goals.

Young people are supported to develop a positive identity and they receive good support to develop a positive self-view. However, there are some young people who have low self-esteem and require specialist support to help them cope with their difficulties. Young people benefit from excellent relationships with staff. They have positive attachments and they trust the adults who support them.

Young people are encouraged to make a positive contribution to the home and the wider community. As a result of their participation, young people learn to develop new interests and hobbies. However, not all young people take full advantage of these positive opportunities. Consequently, they are less likely to develop their social skills, friendships and make positive social networks. Most young people benefit from having contact with their families. But there are some young people who struggle to sustain their family links.

Young people are supported to lead a healthy lifestyle. They receive good advice and support to promote their sexual health. Young people learn to take responsibility for their own health and all are registered with local health services. However, some young people fail to attend their routine health appointments or engage with specialist services. This could compromise their future physical, emotional and psychological health.

Young people receive good support to promote their independence. They learn to develop their life skills to ensure they are properly prepared for life within the adult world. Young people are supported to take controlled risks as part of their growth and natural development. Some young people, for example, are currently learning how to drive. Not all young people benefit from pathway plans to help them prepare for the life of adulthood. The home has requested plans for all eligible care leavers.

Quality of care

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

Young people benefit from excellent relationships with staff and with each other. They thoroughly enjoy living at the home. They benefit from continuity of care that enables them to develop their positive attachments. Young people benefit from highly individualised care that promotes their positive outcomes.

Staff have an excellent awareness of young people's needs and they address their needs comprehensively. Young people's needs, relating to culture, sexuality, gender and ethnicity, are all addressed positively both within care planning and daily living. Young people are looked after without favouritism or prejudice and all young people benefit from fair and equal treatment within the home. Young people know how to make a complaint. They are provided with good information to enable them to do so. The children's guide contains specific details for young people to refer their complaints to Ofsted. As a result, young people can seek external support, if necessary.

Young people's feelings, views and opinions are routinely ascertained to involve them in the running of the home. As a result, young people can have a say in how they are cared for and they can contribute to decisions about their care. Staff actively listen to what young people have to say and they treat their views and opinions seriously.

Young people benefit from homely, good quality living accommodation. The home is furnished, decorated and maintained to a high standard. The home's location ensures young people benefit from good access to local amenities. Community facilities, shops and public transport are all easily accessible to young people.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Staff place young people's welfare and safety at the centre of their practice. They adhere to safe working practice and ensure risks associated with young people are identified clearly. This enables staff to develop specific intervention strategies to promote young people's safety. Staff are trained in child protection. They have the knowledge, training and skills to protect young people from abuse, harassment, intimidation, bullying, neglect and exploitation. Safe recruitment procedures are followed diligently to protect young people from unsafe and unsuitable people.

The home works with a range of professional agencies to promote young people's safety. Staff know how to promote young people's safe return if they are missing from the home. The most recent figures suggest the numbers of missing from home are reducing positively. Concerns to do with vulnerable young people are identified comprehensively. The home works in close partnership with other professional agencies to ensure young people's risk-taking behaviours are minimised.

The behaviours of young people are managed safely. The use of sanctions and restraint is exceptionally rare. Positive behaviour is encouraged and good use is made of rewards, encouragement and praise. Young people are actively supported to behave in a mature and responsible way. There are no issues with young people or offending.

Young people live in a safe and secure environment. There are effective systems in place to promote health and safety within the home. There are regular fire drills and routine health and safety checks undertaken by staff. Young people, staff and visitors are protected from the risks associated with the premises.

Leadership and management

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

No complaints or concerns have arisen since the last inspection. The home has a proven track record based on its performance. It continues to meet the aims and objectives of its Statement of Purpose. The home can demonstrate the positive impact it has made to young people's lives and how their outcomes are improving overtime. The home provides young people with good quality care, positive, memorable and enjoyable experiences.

Young people benefit from a home that is managed efficiently. The home employs a permanent full-time manager who is suitably experienced and qualified. Young people benefit from skilled, qualified, well-trained, and capable staff. Staff are enthusiastic about their roles and their efforts are valued by all young people.

The Registered Manager makes good use of the home's monitoring activities to improve the quality of young people's care. They routinely monitor the home's performance to promote the smooth and effective operations of the home. Independent monitoring visits are used to scrutinise the home's performance to enable the manager to understand the home's strengths and tackle identified weaknesses. A written development plan is used to promote the realistic

development and improvement of the home. There were no requirements or recommendations made at the previous inspection.

Staff have access to good quality training to enable them to develop their knowledge, skills and professional practice. Sufficient numbers are employed to meet the needs and numbers of young people. Staff receive supervision and regular support and this ensures their efforts are channelled effectively.

Young people's case records are stored and treated confidentially. These provide young people with an accurate account of their time and progress within the home.

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.