

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Anthony Kyem
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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 owned and run by a private charitable trust. It provides residential care for up to five young people, who have a physical and/or learning disability. The home provides young people with short, medium and long-term care.

Overall effectiveness

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

Young people thrive and make excellent progress due to the extensive support provided to them by dedicated, caring and enthusiastic staff. Staff are highly skilled, well trained and qualified to meet young people's diverse needs and promote positive outcomes for them. Young people's care plans are highly individualised and these provide staff with a personalised account of how young people's needs will be met on a day-to-day basis. The home provides young people with outstanding personalised care.

Young people enjoy excellent relationships with staff. They are respected and treated as individuals and supported to develop their self-confidence and individual identities. Young people are kept safe and they are made to feel safe.

Staff work with young people in a way that maximises their true potential. Communication difficulties are creatively overcome through the use of signs, symbols and visual supports which are used by staff very effectively, to facilitate consultation. This ensures the views of young people are central to how the home operates with young people purposefully involved and able to exercise their rights to choice, inclusion and participation.

Areas for improvementStatutory 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
34 (2001)	review the quality of young people's care at suitable intervals. (Regulation 34)	05/09/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure the children's guide contains information to enable young people and their families to contact their independent reviewing officer and the Children's Rights Director. (NMS 13.5)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make outstanding progress in relation to their individual starting points. All aspects of their care are well met and they make positive progress and sustained improvement. Young people attend school where their educational achievement is actively promoted and this enables young people to enjoy and achieve. The home maintains close links with young people's schools so that communication between home and school is maintained effectively. Staff have high aspirations for young people and they create a learning environment, which actively supports their educational achievement.

Young people are provided with a broad range of fun, varied and creative activities. Young people thoroughly enjoy these experiences and this enables them to develop their individual interests, social skills and self-confidence. Young people are actively supported to make a positive contribution. They are involved in meal planning and supported to choose their preferred form of activities. Staff, facilitate consultation to support young people to express themselves, for example, some young people have technical aids to enable them to communicate with staff, effectively.

Young people enjoy regular contact with their families. By having contact they are able to sustain their most valued and treasured relationships. Young people's families are always made to feel welcome at the home and they are free to visit, which enables them to have and enjoy regular contact.

Young people are supported to develop their independent living skills to help them make the smooth transition to adult services. Staff are pro-active in ensuring that young people's future placements will meet their needs so that young people receive the right types of support, to promote their positive outcomes. Young people have transition plans in place which specify their need for continued support.

Quality of care

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

Young people enjoy excellent relationships with staff. Staff have positive

relationships with young people's families and they are familiar with young people's individual routines, which enables them to be maintained successfully. Staff work enthusiastically. They make a positive difference to young people's lives by striving to achieve the best outcomes possible. Young people receive high levels of personal support, to assist them to make outstanding progress.

Staff are inspiring. They have the drive and a positive determination to meet young people's needs, comprehensively. Young people's care plans are individualised and these provide a personalised account of how their needs will be met on a day-to-day basis. Young people receive continuity of care to enable them to sustain their healthy attachments and relationships with staff.

The home has a complaints procedure, which is made known to young people and their families. However, the children's guide does not include information to enable them to contact the Children's Rights Director or their independent reviewing officer, as the revised national minimum standards require. No complaints have been received by the home since the previous inspection.

Staff are pro-active in enabling young people to make their views and opinions known. There is excellent communication with young people's families to ensure they are actively involved in any decisions about young people's care. Staff support young people to make a purposeful contribution towards their reviews and they act as young people's advocates. This ensures the views of young people are represented well.

Healthy lifestyles are actively promoted. Young people receive the support they need to enable them to be healthy and stay healthy. Young people are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians and staff provide extensive support, to make sure that young people attend their health appointments, to promote their good health. Staff work in partnership with a wide range of health professionals to ensure that young people's health needs are effectively met. Staff are trained to administer medication safely and they are able to administer emergency treatment, if needed, to promote young people's well-being.

Young people are encouraged to eat healthily and they are actively involved in the planning and preparation of their meals, to help them develop their independent living skills. Mealtimes are sociable occasions which are enjoyed by young people and staff.

The accommodation provided for young people is homely, nicely decorated and furnished to a high standard. Young people are provided with their own bedrooms which are personalised in accordance with their individual needs and wishes. The home's location, size and design meets young people's needs comprehensively.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

There are positive arrangements made to ensure that young people are safeguarded and protected from abuse, bullying and exploitation. All staff are trained in child protection so that they know how to recognise and report allegations or suspected abuse. Staff have an excellent awareness of the procedures to be followed if professional abuse is suspected and this enables them to take swift action to protect young people from harm.

Young people's behaviours are assessed comprehensively on their admission. Staff record all identified risks to enable them to promote young people's welfare and safety. Staff are aware of the procedures to be followed should a young person go missing and they know what action to take should an incident occur. However, there are no issues with young people going missing from the home. Bullying is not an issue for young people to be concerned about. Young people are kept safe and they are made to feel safe.

Staff share the same philosophy towards caring for young people and this enables them to manage young people's behaviours safely, consistently and effectively. Staff have a comprehensive understanding of the needs of young people and this enables them to devise strategies to work with them in a highly supportive way. Staff are trained in the use of physical intervention so they have the skills to defuse or de-escalate a situation or hold young people safely, to protect young people from injury or harm. Restraint has not been used which is testament to the staff's ability to manage young people's behaviours safely.

The home takes health and safety seriously. There are regular fire evacuation drills to show young people how to evacuate the premises safely in the event of fire. Potential hazards, such as gas and household electrical appliances are all serviced within the recommended timescales to promote health and safety within the home. Staff who work at the home are stringently vetted to ensure those employed are suitable to work with vulnerable children.

Leadership and management

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

The home is managed efficiently and effectively by an experienced, skilled and capable manager. Quality assurance systems are used to monitor the standards of young people's care. However, following a recent period of the Registered Manager's absence, managerial monitoring has not taken place, which means that the performance of the home has not been monitored consistently. There is no evidence that this has had a negative impact on young people's outcomes or their quality of care.

In the absence of the Registered Manager there are experienced staff to deputise, which ensures the smooth operation of the home. Collectively staff have the knowledge, experience and skills to meet young people's needs comprehensively. Staff receive high quality training and this ensures they are appropriately skilled and

able to perform their duties professionally.

The home meets the aims and objectives of its Statement of Purpose by delivering outstanding quality care. The home has an excellent track record of outstanding performance and there are no requirements or recommendations resulting from the previous inspection. The home is extremely well resourced and there are excellent facilities to meet the needs of the young people being cared for.

Professionals involved with the home commented that, 'I'm very happy with the way in which (child X) is cared for... I feel that X is happy and feels at home.' Parents' surveys strongly indicate that young people are extremely well cared for and supported. None of the questionnaires received by the home recommended any areas for potential improvement. This would indicate that those who use the service are completely satisfied.

Equality and diversity practice is **outstanding**.