

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Stella Henderson
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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 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**.

Children and young people make good progress at the home. High levels of quality support and care planning enables them to develop at their own pace, improve their physical and emotional health and integrate successfully into the local and wider community.

Staff support children and young people with very complex needs in a way that affords them safety and dignity. Parents and interested parties concur with this view and comment positively on the professionalism of staff and the nurturing environment of the home.

Management and monitoring arrangements ensure the home runs smoothly for the benefit of children and young people and provides effective support for staff. Some shortfalls are identified however, in the quality of recording and documentary compliance with regulations. These have no direct impact on children and young people however and the provider took immediate steps to address these matters.

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
17A (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose which shall include points (a) to (i) (Regulation 17B)(3)	05/10/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure that visits of the home carried out under Regulation 33 include relevant checks set out in regulations and guidance and checks of any disciplinary measures and use of restraint and records of missing person's reports (NMS 21.7)
- improve the quality and adequacy of record keeping and take action when needed. (NMS 22.1)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make good progress in a supportive, stable and caring environment. Their complex health and behavioural needs are carefully assessed and reviewed and relevant professionals regularly contribute to their care plans. This holistic approach ensures young people achieve positive outcomes. One parent noted that staff 'look after every aspect of my child's welfare as if he were their own. If you could write a wish list beforehand of what you wanted for your children, Overdale would fulfil every item'.

Young people attend school or college placements and are well supported to achieve their educational and personal goals and their participation in the home is well-facilitated. For example, they are enabled to make choices about their day such as which activity to do next or what they would like to eat.

Young people enjoy a range of activities in the community such as attending youth club, drama class and going to the pub where they are old enough to do so. They also tend to the vegetable and flower gardens at the home. This helps young people to develop socially and offers structure to their lives.

Young people are supported to be as independent as possible and transitions to adult care are managed well. They are consulted throughout this process and helped to acquire the skills they will need for future independent living.

Quality of care

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

Detailed individual placement and daily living plans provide clear information on how young people are to be cared for and the objectives to be achieved. Staff work effectively with partner agencies, such as education and health, to agree consistent approaches and maximise young people's learning, independence and quality of life.

Parents and interested parties such as social workers and independent reviewing officers comment positively on the quality of care provided at the home. One parent noted that staff 'listen well, and support well. They provide a very caring environment which offers security through repetition and good planning which enables my son to flourish'.

Staff work pro-actively and sensitively with parents to promote family relationships and positive contact experiences. Staff are very flexible in supporting arrangements to suit everyone's needs and fully recognise the importance of maintaining these relationships for young people. One parent noted that staff are 'very welcoming'.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

The safety of young people is a priority and their welfare is central to practice. The nature and complexity of young people's diverse needs, as well as good staffing ratios, means that young people do not experience bullying or go missing from the home.

Staff are very aware of their safeguarding responsibilities, reporting arrangements and they maintain current knowledge through refreshing their training. This includes safeguarding training specifically relating to children with disability.

Young people sometimes display challenging behaviours which present risks to keep them and staff safe. This is managed well including, where necessary, physical restraint to protect young people and others. The recording of physical restraints is not entirely compliant with the regulations however, which may fail to identify poor practice.

Leadership and management

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

The home is effectively managed by an experienced registered manager who works well with other agencies. One social worker noted that 'statutory visits are always productive. Staff are well informed and can answer my queries. I have found all staff, especially the registered manager, to be professional and approachable'.

The home is adequately resourced in terms of both finances and specialist equipment. This ensures that young people's diverse needs are met and that they

enjoy an environment which is clean, homely and comfortable. Staffing ratios are sufficient to meet the individual needs of young people and are increased when necessary to meet their complex needs. One parent commented positively on the improvement in staffing in terms of the gender balance of the team.

Staff are deployed with time to undertake individual work with young people, to attend regular team meetings and supervision, and complete necessary paperwork. They are provided with a wide range of training opportunities to enhance their skills and competences which helps to improve the services provided to young people.

Monitoring arrangements and review of practice and interventions are good, and young people benefit from creative and practical thinking applied to address their needs. Regulation 33 visits further help to drive forward improvement but do not sufficiently address the recording of restraints however.

Young people's records are well maintained and provide good detail of the needs and experience of young people at the home. A pattern emerges around the quality of recording across a number of documents however, which although having no impact on young people does not always provide an accurate reflection of processes implemented.

A requirement made at the last inspection to provide HMCI with a copy of the regulation 34 report has been met.

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.