

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC008600
Inspection date	07/06/2012
Inspector	Stella Henderson
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	22/09/2011
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2012

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is privately owned and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six children and young people of either sex, aged between 11 and 17 years of age.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: a service that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

Good: a service 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 **adequate**.

Young people say that they feel safe at the home. They have largely positive views about staff and feel they have made some progress during their time there. Young people benefit from suitable levels of care and support that reflects their diverse needs. They are consulted about aspects of their care and how the home is run.

Young people enjoy a range of activities and are looked after by staff who confirm they are well supported. The manager works closely with staff and has a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. Some areas for development are identified, however, with regard to emergency escape procedures, skills for independence and monitoring.

Two requirements are also raised in order to improve recruitment procedures and ensuring copies of the Regulation 33 reports are sent to Ofsted within required timescales. Neither of these shortfalls has a direct impact on the safety nor well-being of young people.

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
26 (2001)	ensure that any offer of employment to a person is subject to paragraph (3)(d) being complied with in relation to that person (Regulation 26 (5)(a))	02/07/2012
33 (2001)	supply a copy of the Regulation 33 report to Her Majesty's Chief Inspector. (Regulation 33 (3)(5)(a))	02/07/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure that there is an emergency escape plan that all staff and children are familiar with and have practised so they know what to do in an emergency. This is in particular reference to waking night staff (NMS 10.9)
- support children to develop practical skills, including shopping, buying, cooking and keeping food, washing clothes, personal self-care and understanding and taking responsibility for personal health care (NMS 12.1 (e))
- strengthen monitoring to ensure that the management of the home ensures all staff's work is consistent with these regulations and national minimum standards, the home's policies and procedures. (NMS 21.3)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people recognise the progress they have made during their time at the home. They eat well, sleep well and are generally in good health, some enjoying the physical benefits associated with sports and leisure activities. Some young people are studying for examinations and the majority achieve satisfactory educational outcomes during their time at the home.

Young people's sense of identity and understanding of their history is reinforced through suitable contact arrangements with their families and placement planning which recognises different cultural needs. They experience improved emotional resilience through satisfactory one-to-one work and support from specialist psychological services.

All young people are given opportunities to prepare for independence, being encouraged to shop, cook, clean and do their laundry. However, a lack of focus on more complex practical and life skills hinders young people's ability to cope with all aspects of their future adult life.

Quality of care

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

Young people experience satisfactory quality of care. Staff set clear boundaries so that young people enjoy cordial relationships with each other and, as a consequence, there is no bullying at the home and no need for physical restraint.

Young people's needs are suitably met through individual placement planning which takes into account any specific diverse needs. Staff implement these plans to ensure that young people have access to routine and specialist services, are supported in their education and wider learning and given opportunities to develop their ability to live and function in the wider community.

Young people say that staff gain their views through individual consultation and their opinions inform some aspects of the running of the home, such as choosing decorations and menu-planning. Young people are confident in expressing their views and staff work hard with young people to ensure that this confidence is channelled in a positive way.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people confirm they feel safe at the home and know how to make a complaint. There are suitable arrangements to enable staff to care for young people safely, such as training on safeguarding, health and safety and first aid.

The location of the home provides young people with privacy, safety and security and a range of risk assessments help to safeguard young people against known or likely dangers. Fire equipment is to hand and a member of staff has particular responsibility as fire warden. However, not all waking night staff have practised emergency evacuation procedures. This does not sufficiently secure the safety of both staff and young people.

Young people are helped to understand the consequences of risk-taking behaviour. Young people rarely choose to go missing from the home, but on these occasions effective procedures are implemented to locate young people and ensure their safe return.

Young people are protected because the manager of the home exercises due diligence in ensuring that any allegations or concerns are responded to promptly and all significant parties notified. The manager also ensures that no new employee works in the home until all appropriate checks are in place. This good practice is undermined, however, by the provider offering contracts of employment before all the required information is obtained.

Leadership and management

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

Young people live in a home which the Registered Manager ensures is organised in such a way as to provide them with a consistent level of care. She maintains a presence in the home and so is on hand to deal with any queries from young people or staff. There is effective working with professionals in other agencies who comment positively on the quality of care young people receive. The home is sufficiently resourced in terms of staffing and finance.

Staff say they are well supported by the manager and they appreciate being able to have immediate supervision if necessary on particular issues. A range of training is provided to support them in their work and, as a result, young people are cared for by a team which is suitably qualified and experienced.

The manager understands the main needs and strengths of the home and is assisted in her role by independent supervision. Development plans are in place and her approach to the task has meant that a recommendation made at the last inspection with regard to recording has been met. Actions raised to improve practice with regard to consultation with young people, their parents and young people, information in the Statement of Purpose and information on prospective employees have also been addressed. These measures improve safety for young people.

Young people's welfare and safety is enhanced by independent visits to the home by the Regulation 33 visitor. However, although these visits are undertaken monthly, reports are not sent to Ofsted within required timescales. The manager's systems for monitoring the home are sound in many respects, but are not robust enough to ensure that all staff work consistently within the home's framework of policies and procedures, regulations and standards. This means that not all young people achieve optimum outcomes.

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.