

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Maureen Hamer
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Provision subtype	Children's home

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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

A national charity owns and operates this children's home. Short break and respite care is provided for children and young people with disabilities up to the age of 18 years. The centre offers a range of services from day care to overnight and weekend stays. Up to six children and young people can be cared for overnight at any one time.

Overall effectiveness

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

This home is effectively managed and provides very good individualised care to young people which contributes to excellent outcomes for them. Parents and young people are engaged in the development of care plans. Effective communication with young people and their carers is a strength of this service as well as the access to a wide range of positive activities. Some young people have complex health care needs that are well met by the competent staff group.

Following this inspection there are some areas that require attention. This is in respect of the following: The home's control, discipline and restraint recording is not recorded in one log. All copies of significant incidents are not copied and held on the young people's files. A policy for use of electronic devices is not in place. Supervision is not always carried out on a regular basis. Staff references are not verified by telephone. Staff safeguarding awareness training needs up-dating. Staff are not always sensitive to young people's presence when discussing private issues. Not all care plans are signed.

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
17B (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 (Regulation 17b (3))	28/10/2011
28	maintain in respect of each child who is accommodated in the	28/10/2011

(2001)	home a record in permanent form which includes the information, documents and records specified in Schedule 3 relating to that child. (Regulation 28 (1) (a) Schedule (3) (10))	
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Recommendations

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

- ensure that staff are updated about and follow safeguarding policy and that they are able to refer safeguarding issues to managers (NMS 4.6)
- maintain children's privacy and ensure that their confidentiality is appropriately protected (NMS 3.7)
- ensure that all people working in the home have their written references verified by telephone enquiries (NMS 16.1)
- maintain a record detailing the time, dates and length of each supervision with each member of staff, including the registered person and that the record is signed by the supervisor and member of staff at the end of supervision. (NMS 19.5)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people are provided consistently good individualised care and attention that builds their confidence and promotes excellent outcomes. Parents and young people are engaged in writing care plans which inform the delivery of care. This approach ensures that young people's likes and dislikes are well known and promotes continuity of care and a sense of security for young people. Goals are set that support the young person to achieve at their own pace.

This short breaks provision works with parents, young people and placing authorities to understand the young person's needs and interests. This informs how services are delivered and ensures that young people have access to individualised activities such as golf that they enjoy and find stimulating one young person said: 'I like being able to go out and see other young people.'

Some young people have complex medical health conditions that are well understood. A competent team of care and nursing staff assess risks and act to ensure good outcomes are attained. Medication is appropriately supervised and is well managed to ensure that young people's health is maximised. Mealtimes are social occasions between staff, young people and visitors. Great importance is given to preparing nutritious meals that young people enjoy to promote their good health.

Communication methods are individualised according to young people's preferred method reducing frustration and this promotes a relaxed environment. An individualised approach to young people is promoted across all aspects of their care including dressing, food preferences and activities supporting and promoting self-esteem.

Young people attend school and there are good links between the schools and the home's staff to ensure effective care and support is given. Whilst young people only attend the centre for short periods of time they are encouraged to be involved in some tasks such as food preparation and shopping.

Quality of care

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

Young people are relaxed and confident and have good relationships with staff. The foundation for these good relationships is based on respecting what is important to the young people and their parents in terms of understanding their needs and how these needs are to be met. In addition staff have high regard for young people's preferences, for example, how they like to have their hair dressed.

Some of the young people have attended this short break service for many years. This has enabled young people to get to know staff and to build a secure relationship in which they feel safe. Young people's means of communication are identified and staff are trained to effectively communicate and this reduces young people's sense of frustration. There is a good staff to young people ratio that provides effective and appropriate supervision. Occasionally staff talk about personal issues within hearing distance of young people and this strongly contrasts with staff's usual high level of regard for young people.

Young people receive safe administration of medication from competent staff who follow the service's policy. Parents report that they know how to make a complaint. There are few concerns or complaints and when they do occur the service responds promptly and achieves good outcomes. Parents report that staff listen and act to concerns that they raise providing parents with confidence in the service.

The care plans are very individualised. Staff maintain a scrap book to have a record of the young person's positive experiences this effectively contributes to the young person's life story.

Staff liaise with a range of partners to ensure that young people's care is holistic and comprehensive. Reviews are attended by staff from the home to ensure the young person's progress is known, changes to the care plan is shared and actions are taken forward to improve the young person's welfare and well-being.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people and their parents report that they feel safe in this home. Good communication ensures that risks to young people are identified. Proportionate action is taken to promote their welfare whilst also providing opportunities to participate in activities that they enjoy. Staff are aware of the action to take when a young person goes missing from home to secure their safe return.

Young people's behaviour is positive and confident. Staff are trained to ensure they are able to de-escalate situations and to keep young people safe. Positive handling techniques are occasionally used to safeguard young people. The home has two volumes within which measure of control, restraint or discipline are recorded this leads to some confusion.

There is a good recruitment process in place, however, it is not clear that references are verified over the telephone to ensure young people are kept safe and the recruitment systems are fully robust.

The home environment is bright with photographs of staff and young people on display this contributes to a homely environment. The shared living space is well used and provides opportunities for young people to engage in a range of activities and to be appropriately supervised. The home undertakes regular health and safety checks to ensure that young people are living in a safe environment.

Staff have good knowledge about the action that they should take in the event of an allegation or disclosure regarding child protection issues. However, staff do not always promptly refer such incidents to senior staff. The manager has acted effectively to ensure young people are safeguarded.

Leadership and management

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

This home is run effectively and efficiently. The manager has a focus on supporting staff to ensure the quality of care provided to young people is good. The manager is successful in maintaining staffing levels and improving the physical environment of the home, this contributes to a positive and relaxing environment for young people.

Regulation 34 reports are completed on a regular basis and help the manager identify priorities for the service's development plan which is focused on improving services for young people. Regulation 33 reports are completed well and comment on how the young people are cared for. The home demonstrates a capacity to improve.

There is a good overview of staff training and all mandatory training is up-to-date. There is a large staff group of care workers and nurses to provide good care for children with complex needs. Whilst outcomes for young people are good, some members of staff describe some differences in their practice. The manager has organised a team building event to enhance team working focused on continuing to

improve outcomes for young people.

Appraisals are up-to-date and there are good daily handover meetings to ensure all staff are aware of the young people's needs. Whole day staff meetings are held once a month to ensure staff have the opportunity to discuss young people and to gain support where required. Supervision is not always carried out on a regular basis particularly during the summer holiday period.

Electronic hearing devices are used and occasionally a camera link, parents and placing authorities agree to such devices, and they are outlined in the young person's care plan and Statement of Purpose, however, there is not a policy in place to describe its use to promote young people's welfare.

All significant events are documented but they are not always kept on the young person's file as required to ensure a comprehensive picture of the young person's experiences whilst accommodated.

Recommendations raised at the last inspection have been positively acted upon and led to greater consistency in the recording and monitoring of complaints, physical restraints and individual behaviour and care plans. This information helps the manager to effectively monitor young people's quality of care. However, some of the paperwork is not signed and dated so neither the author nor the period of time it is relevant to is clear.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.