

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Gaynor Moorey
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Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	29/01/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The children's home is registered to offer short break placements for children and young people with learning and/or physical disabilities. The home is owned and run by a charitable organisation.

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**.

This inspection of the home found that the service provides a good standard of care to young people who have short breaks. Relationships between staff and young people are positive, caring and supportive. Staff are knowledgeable and are able to care for all of the young people's individual needs. Robust and detailed systems are in place to assess, monitor and review care needs ensuring that care delivered is of a good standard.

Young people are provided a wealth of varied activities which promotes enjoyment and learning in all aspects of their lives. The staff ensure young people are able to take calculated risks but are safe during their stays at the home. Staff are experienced in communication skills enabling young people to have their choices or concerns heard.

Young people stay in a home that provides a good standard of accommodation and a homely environment. The home has very good facilities to provide each of the young people's stays with organised and fun activities which are undertaken by competent trained staff.

Quality of care in the home is subject to a monitoring system. The long term manager and stable, committed staff team examine their practice through supervision, and enhance knowledge with training, with a view to improving the service that they offer to the young people.

At the last inspection the home received four recommendations which related to the

recording of any physical behaviour management and sanctions in a way that could not be altered and to ensure that any sanctions such as 'time out' were used appropriately. The home has put into place a 'time out' book which cannot be tampered with and is numbered. The book records the reasons why children and young people have been given 'time out' and it was seen to have only been used appropriately. Two of the recommendations related to the Regulation 33 and the Regulation 34 report and the content of the reports. The last Regulation 33 report was seen to contain more information about the unit and the visitor had spoken to and collected views from carers, staff, parents and children. The last Regulation 34 report was completed and sent in November 2013. The format has changed to cover those areas listed in Schedule 6 and more information had been included although the report still lacked enough evaluative information.

The home is given two recommendations at this inspection which relate to ensuring that policies and procedures are up to date and contain the correct information related to Ofsted and that the regulation 34 reports need to include more evaluative information.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure there are clear and effective procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of home (NMS 21.1)
- ensure Regulation 34 monitoring includes evaluation of any trends and issues of concern in order to improve the quality of care provided. (Volume 5, statutory guidance, paragraph 3.14)

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people benefit from very individualised support which helps them grow in confidence. They enjoy caring professional relationships with staff that enables them to get the best from each stay at the home. Staff are aware of young people's strengths and vulnerabilities and help to nurture their talents and interests. Young people are offered experiences that they may not otherwise have had, this extends their world and promotes learning, skills and enjoyment.

Young people enjoy an extensive variety of activities which the staff enable them to partake in. This includes using the facilities at the home such as the garden where they can cycle, use play equipment and play in the sensory area with water and instruments and within the home learn from the stimulating toys, art room, and sensory room. Young people also use the local community and attend local facilities

such as parks, play areas and at Christmas were involved in the Christmas carol concert at the church. In holiday time the young people also go on day trips to cultural sites, farms, theme parks, and the cinema. All young people are encouraged to take part in new experiences at their own speed as all the young people accessing the home have profound physical and/or learning disabilities. One young person said 'I like coming to the home because it makes me feel happy and safe. I make more friendships because I meet new children'.

Young people prosper from having their general health needs and specific care needs promoted to a very high standard through knowledgeable staff, and support given to parent/carers for regular appointments with health professionals such as opticians and dentists. Young people are given and receive comprehensive advice and guidance on issues such as sexual health and relationships and other social issues in an appropriate manner according to age and understanding.

Young people benefit to a good standard from the promotion of their education and the opportunities to experience this as a positive part of their lives. They receive good levels of support and benefit from members of staff getting them up and ready for the day ahead. Young people were supported in homework and by the facilities and equipment at the home that promotes learning new skills.

Good levels of communication ensure young people and parent/carers feel happy when young people spend time at the home. One parent said 'My daughter loves going to the home. I think she feels grown up and enjoys the experience and is benefitting greatly from doing something just for herself like any teenager'. Young people are able to experience, learn about and enjoy the local community.

Young people receive carefully thought out support to develop their independent living skills in conjunction with their age and understanding. Support offered to young people and families when in transition and preparing to move on to adult services is good with staff finding the right level of support for each individual young person's needs.

Quality of care

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

Young people are able to benefit because the staff team offers good personalised individual support. As a result of their approach the young people are able to benefit from positive relationships with clear boundaries.

Staff are very knowledgeable about the young people disabilities and how they affect them, making their time in the home comfortable, safe and happy.

The young people's views are promoted and valued to a good standard. Each young person has numerous forums both formal and informal to voice their feelings and opinions. Staff have outstanding knowledge of how each young person communicates, both recognised styles of communication such as signs and symbols and eye boards, but also very personal recognition of individual ways of

communicating. There is a culture of promoting young people's rights and encouraging them to voice their feelings and opinions appropriately. Young people are able to influence decisions relating to their daily lives, such as independent living.

Young people's comprehensive care plans clearly identify their individual needs. This process in turn contributes to statutory reviews and means that reports and staff input accurately reflects each young person's progress. Young people are invited to attend their reviews and can choose whether to attend or not.

Healthy lifestyles are encouraged by the staff guiding young people in choosing healthy menus and by encouraging them to partake in physical exercise and activities. Staff awareness of each young person's conditions and disabilities enables them to plan the best experience when young people come to stay. Staff have clear knowledge of any medical or personal care needs. Young people are given the most private and dignified personal care whilst they are staying at the home. Young people are provided with their medication by staff who have very good understanding of the administration of medication and specific procedures needed to ensure young people remain safe, happy and well on their stay.

Young people are enabled to follow their individual needs including those which are cultural and spiritual whilst spending time at the home. Members of staff enable the young people to take part in positive and enriching activities. This approach enables them to develop their self-esteem and confidence and to experience being a positive part of a community.

Young people benefit from living in a home which is well maintained. The home is very child-focussed and has an excellent garden where the young people can play and really good soft play areas indoors.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Staff understand young people's individual needs and vulnerabilities and do all they can to protect young people from abuse and harm. Staff are confident in processes to follow should they be concerned for a young person's safety or welfare and keep logs where appropriate. Clear procedures provide a framework for the staff to act on if they need to share concerns with safeguarding agencies. Any issues that have arisen are robustly dealt with and investigated to the highest level to ensure the safety of the young people while staying at the home.

Young people benefit from high staffing levels which provide for appropriate supervision and the effective management of risk. Consideration is given to the compatibility of groups when arranging programmes. This means that bullying is not identified as an issue at the home nor is there a negative impact on a young person due to the known behaviour of another.

The home has a policy in place for when young people go missing and this has been

produced in line with the local police procedure. Due to the vulnerability of the young people the police would be immediately informed if a young person did leave the home without permission.

Young people are relaxed and 'at home' during their stay. Positive behaviour is promoted and young people are supported in diverting inappropriate behaviour into more positive experiences, such as soft play or use of the garden. Staff are trained in physical intervention. The home uses a time out approach rather than any restraint techniques. These incidents are recorded in an appropriate format. Young people now have detailed behaviour management plans, which clearly record their behaviour and how best to approach any issues and de-escalate a situation.

Young people benefit from a stable staff team. The home has a recruitment policy, which generally ensures that only adults who have been assessed as suitable to work with young people are employed.

The environment is subject to stringent checks and assessments and is safe for the young people to spend time in.

Leadership and management

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

Young people benefit from a home which is very effectively and consistently managed. Robust monitoring and reflective practice ensures that managers communicate an expectation to the staff team that care given to the young people is of a good standard. The home has a comprehensive Statement of Purpose and a children's guide which is appropriate for the young people using the service.

Members of staff report being very committed to the well-being of the young people and supported in their role by stable and competent management. Regular training and supervision is of a good standard.

At the last inspection the home received four recommendations which related to the recording of any physical behaviour management and sanctions in a way that could not be altered and to ensure that any sanctions such as 'time out' were used appropriately. The home has put into place a 'time out' book which can not be tampered with and is numbered. The book records the reasons why children and young people have been given 'time out' and it was seen to have only been used on occasions where young people were either attempting to hurt themselves or others and had been given warnings but had refused to stop.

Two of the recommendations related to the Regulation 33 and the Regulation 34 report and the content of the reports. The last Regulation 33 report was seen to contain more information about the unit and the visitor had spoken to and collected views from carers, staff, parents and children.

Regulation 34 report, The last report was completed and sent in November. The format has changed to cover those areas listed in Schedule 6 and more information had been included although the report still lack enough evaluative information.

Compliance can be seen in the home's use of the Regulation 33 reports and how these have been developed to be a more useful tool in monitoring the homes practice. Regulation 34 reports also show how the manager has monitored the home however the reports lack evaluation of the service.

The staffing complement ensures that there are always sufficient staff on shift to be able to respond to young people's needs. The low staff turnover and the stability of the staff team ensures that the young people benefit from consistent care by a motivated and trained staff team.

All significant events relating to the protection of children accommodated in the home are notified by the registered person of the home to the appropriate authorities and appropriate action is taken following each incident.

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* and the evaluation schedule for the inspection of children's homes.