

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Caroline Wilson
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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

This home is run by a charitable organisation and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to 19 children: 15 children with learning disabilities between the ages of five years and 18 years of age, and up to four places for children with a physical disability. It is split into four separate units, three of which offer residential services and one provides three places for respite care.

Overall effectiveness

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

Leaders within the home have an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. This leads to outstanding outcomes for children due to the careful care planning and staff's commitment to children achieving their aspirations. Staff work hard to ensure that young people's views are understood, listened to and used as a basis to improve the care that they provide.

The home is excellent at ensuring young people's good health needs are met. This is in relation to the administration of medication and having full information in relation to their health needs. Although this is a large home, it is excellent at meeting young people's individual needs and making their experiences as homely as possible. This is reflected in young people's bedrooms, the activities that they are involved in as well as their diverse needs being met. Staff within the home are highly committed at improving outcomes for young people and are constantly looking at ways to improve the experiences of young people placed. Most recently they have introduced documentation which provides those involved in the young person's lives to get an excellent understanding of the young person. Staff and management are excellent at promoting and safeguarding the welfare of young people in all aspects of the care that they provide.

One shortfall was noted within the Running and Missing From Home and Care policy and procedures, which is not available. However, this has not negatively impacted on the care of young people. Risk assessments are in place that identify whether a young person is susceptible to this and strategies are in place to minimise any likely incidences. Such occurrences are rare. Staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow in the unlikely event that a young person is missing.

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
16 (2001)	ensure that a procedure to be followed is in place to be followed when any child accommodated is absent without permission which has regard to any relevant local authority or police protocols on missing children (Regulation 16 (4) (b))	31/01/2012

Recommendations

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

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Excellent arrangements are in place in relation to young people's needs. Their health is constantly monitored for any changes or deterioration in any health conditions. This ensures that their health and well-being are promoted and that they are provided with all the necessary services to respond to their needs. Young people with physical disabilities are provided with equipment that enables them to live a full and comfortable life as possible. This includes beds and wheelchairs which help support specific health conditions.

Young people participate in an excellent range of activities for them to enjoy. These take place both in the home and out in the local community. Each unit has its own vehicle in which young people benefit from ad hoc opportunities to enjoy days out like you would in your own family. Risk assessments are in place which ensure that young people only engage in activities which promote their well-being.

Full attention is paid to the diverse needs of young people. Their religious, disability and cultural needs are well met. Young people interact with others from backgrounds similar to their own. Where this can not be met by staff within the unit, they have contact with people or external organisations that are reflective of their individual diverse needs.

Young people enjoy freshly prepared, home cooked meals that are wholesome and nutritious and produced to a high standard by staff. These take into account their personal tastes as well as any other cultural or religious factors.

Quality of care

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

Staff are excellent at meeting the health needs of young people. Staff have the relevant skills and knowledge with regards to this. Staff are trained to deal with specific individual health needs that arise from a young person's disability, chronic condition or any other complex needs. Excellent processes and procedures are in place which ensures that medication is administered correctly and competently. Staff competently administer medication in accordance with prescriptions and procedural guidelines. Staff have documentation in place which ensure that young people's health needs are promoted whilst they are outside of the unit. They have developed a 'health passport'. This provides staff and other health professionals with a chronology of health appointments, allergies, any contraindications to medication, and essential information such as primary health care givers involved with the young person. Good arrangements are in place which ensure that medication is disposed of safely.

Staff at the home have excellent knowledge of the young people in their care. Communication with young people is a key factor of the work that they do. This is irrespective of each young person's disability. Staff are aware of the meanings and gestures of young people who are non-verbal. As a consequence, they readily are able to meet a young person's needs, whether they require reassurance or a drink. Staff have compiled a document, which provides comprehensive pen picture of each young person. This includes comprehensive and detailed information about their routines, any allergies and medication. This enables staff to provide excellent consistency of care and ensures that young people's needs and wishes are met, as far as practicable.

Staff are excellent at ensuring that young people have a positive self view. They have high aspirations for young people in their care. This is central to and integrated to every aspect of young people's care, support and daily life. Young people are supported to take pride in their identity and heritage. Staff ensure that young people understand young people's heritage, therefore are able to respond to these in the most appropriate way. Staff have regular contact with those who have parental responsibility who act as advocates on behalf of young people. These advocates act on young people's behalf if they feel that they are being treated unjustly or that their views or wishes have been ignored. Any complaints made are easily resolved through conversations with staff members. Formal complaints are resolved in a timely manner and to the satisfaction of the complainant.

Young people benefit from regular contact with friends, which helps them to sustain, reinforce and create links with their birth family and wider support networks. Contact arrangements are clear, known to staff and are undertaken in accordance with plans set out by placing authorities.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Excellent steps are taken to ensure that children feel safe and secure and that they

are protected from harm. Staff have an excellent understanding of the vulnerabilities of young people with disabilities. Staff are alert to the non-verbal and physical signs of abuse. They have an excellent understanding of their responsibilities regarding this and the action that they should take in the event of a safeguarding concern be raised in order that young people's welfare can be promoted.

Staffing levels are high which ensures that children are effectively monitored and incidences of them going missing or unauthorised absent are extremely rare. Staff have good knowledge and understanding of the reporting and recording systems. However, the policies in place are not reflective of the local Running and Missing From Home and Care procedures. This has not negatively impacted on young people's safety due to high levels of monitoring and minimal incidences of young people going missing.

The home provides a high level of physical safety for children and ensure that the premises are robustly and regularly checked in order to eliminate hazards. Health and safety inspections by external agencies are also undertaken within required timescales to ensure that all equipment is in good working order. This includes maintaining equipment such as wheelchairs and hoists to ensure that they are safe for young people's use.

Staff have introduced robust documentation which enables them to have an excellent understanding of each individual young person. These are based on young people's statutory and the home's own care plans. These ensure that young people's needs and wishes are met to a high standard on a day to day and long term basis. Staff clearly understand the vulnerabilities of young people and take effective action to minimise the impact of these.

Clear behaviour management strategies are in place which help to reduce any incidences of negative behaviour exhibited by a young person. Staff are skilled at diffusing difficult situations to avoid them escalating. This may include 'time out' for the young person. Positive behaviour is reinforced. Any sanctions that are imposed occur immediately and for short periods of time. This is so the young person has an understanding of why their behaviour may not be appropriate and the effect that their behaviour may have on others. Restraints are only undertaken to prevent likely injury to the young person or others. Appropriate recording and information sharing systems are in place. This ensures that restraints are reviewed to ensure that they are conducted safely and in accordance with policies and procedures.

Recruitment process are robust and take into account safeguarding guidelines as set out in the Warner report.

The home is located, designed and maintained to a good standard. Young people's rooms are well furnished and their rooms are highly personalised and meet their individual tastes.

Leadership and management

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

The home has a strong management and staff team who are enthusiastic and committed to meeting the individual needs of young people placed. The manager is supported by deputy managers who deputise in his absence and who also have particular areas of interest which tackle areas of weakness and build on areas of strength. The home constantly looks at ways to improve the overall experience of young people and ensuring that their outcomes are robustly monitored. The management and senior support team work together exceptionally well to ensure that the staff team are well supervised and trained in promoting the welfare of young people. The responses that staff give are updated regularly to meet the changing needs of young people.

Regular monitoring of the home is undertaken to ensure that the home is operating in accordance with its Statement of Purpose. This includes regulation 33 visits by an independent person as well as regulation 34 monitoring by the manager. This monitoring is effective in ensuring that the home continues to provide excellent outcomes for young people.

Staff receive substantial support from management. As a consequence they have an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities and they have high expectations of what young people can achieve. Staff confirm that managers are highly committed and readily available should they have any queries or concerns about any aspect of meeting the individual needs of young people or in respect of the way that the home is run. Staff have their own areas of specialism in which they take responsibility. This keeps them motivated to continually gain knowledge and understanding of the work that they do.

All staff have or are working towards obtaining qualifications which provides them with a theoretical basis to promote the welfare of young people. Systems are in place to ensure that mandatory training, such as safeguarding and physical intervention training are undertaken at appropriate intervals. This ensures that staff knowledge stays current and refreshed and that they can meet the needs of young people placed.

Equality and diversity practice is **outstanding**.