

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Diana Waters
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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 private children's home is registered for five young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home provides individual support and preparation for independent living and offers an outreach service to support young people who have moved locally.

Overall effectiveness

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

The home provides a good standard of care with excellent outcomes for young people. Placement plans demonstrate the differences in progress for young people and care is delivered according to individual needs. Exceptional support is sustained both during and after the placement, enabling young people to progress with an appropriate safety net. Young people say they feel safe in their placements and parents comment on improved relationships and behaviour. Young people continue to make good progress through the good supportive relationships they have with staff.

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 full and satisfactory written information is available as specified in schedule 2, specifically on the therapist. (Reg 26, Schedule 2)	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**.

On admission young people have often experienced challenging life events and have not had the same opportunities as their peers. With support, and the security of the placement, they are helped to acquire new skills. Young people are now in a stable environment and benefit from care given by a committed and supportive staff team. Both the manager and the staff team strive to ensure young people's individual cultural needs are met.

Staff help young people to be active and participate in activities, for example, attending the gym, youth club and scouts. A good balance between young people pursuing activities individually and together recognises the needs of both the individual and the group.

Young people make progress in their education, despite fragmented education histories, with attendance at school, college or tutors recruited by the home. Individualised education packages are a feature of this home and liaison with the education providers are good. Young people are encouraged to learn by staff who provide transport, incentives and support.

Young people who have previously lived at the home often continue to receive support when leaving the home to live locally. Some young people have worked exceptionally hard attending college and university and both they and the staff are justifiably proud of their achievements. Successful outcomes for these young people demonstrate the strength of relationship and care offered both during and after placement.

The physical and emotional health of young people is generally good. They regularly access support from health professionals. The opportunity to access counselling also benefits young people. Counselling helps them develop a sense of identity and to start to resolve some difficult issues within a supportive environment. A parent commented 'You have been there every step of the way and it has meant so much, thank you for all the time and effort you have put in for my child.'

Quality of care

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

The views of young people are sought at infrequent community meetings, during one-to-one key working sessions and in general living situations. Young people confirm they have regular contact with staff and their opinions are carefully considered when changes are made to the home. The staffing levels allow young people to safely engage in a range of activities.

Young people are aware of the home's complaints procedure. Complaints raised by young people are low and they say staff listen to their concerns and will listen and do something about them. The approach adopted by staff enables most concerns to be resolved quickly and regular access to the manager and provider supports quick resolutions. The last recorded external complaint was in July 2011 and did not

involve the young people from the home. Relationships with neighbours are generally cordial and supportive.

No restraints have been recorded since 2002. While conflict does occur between young people they do not report or perceive bullying to be an issue. Staff help young people resolve their differences and help young people develop strategies for coping with conflict. Relationships between staff and young people are good and help young people make progress in most aspects of their development. Young people benefit from the care given by committed staff, young people report, 'I like living here, I like the staff and staff are good to me.' and 'You couldn't ask for better staff.' Young people report that sanctions given are seen as fair and rewards are given to encourage positive behaviour. The home provides a good standard of accommodation. It is located within a town location with easy access to a range of shopping, leisure and recreational facilities.

The Registered Manager and staff discuss and practice equal opportunities. They empower young people to challenge discrimination and prejudice by providing good role models and opportunities for young people to explore their heritage and culture. The aim is to broaden and educate young people in understanding their values and respect for other people's choices.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Positive behaviour is promoted with an emphasis on good relationships and clear expectations. The home adopts a reassuring and non-judgemental approach to incidents such as when young people go missing, focusing on keeping in touch and facilitating a safe return. While incidents of some young people who go missing are high, when they occur staff adhere to the policies and procedures of the home. A proactive close working relationship with the local police enable safe and well checks to be carried out. Patterns of behaviour are closely analysed, with a view to lessen these occurrences. Young people state that they are well cared for by staff and feel safe and protected.

Recruitment procedures for staff are generally good and assess the suitability of adults to work with young people. However some checks for the therapist were not found on file.

Good staffing ratios routinely provide young people with support to engage in activities through which they develop confidence and life skills.

The home provides a good standard of accommodation with appropriate checks in place.

Leadership and management

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

Leadership and management of the home are good. The Registered Manager and staff team have a strong desire to provide a quality service and improve outcomes. Requirements and recommendations are addressed and means outcomes for young people improve. The Statement of Purpose is under review to ensure it provides an accurate reflection of the service provided with the updated regulations and standards. A handbook for young people is published in a format they can understand and informs them of their rights and responsibilities as well as the standard of service they can expect to receive.

The registered provider is in the home on a daily basis and takes an interest in the day-to-day business of the home; regular monitoring reports from the provider and manager are conducted regularly. This ensures the care and individual needs of the young people are consistently reviewed.

The home is staffed allowing staffing levels to be increased in response to the level of risk presented by young people. Young people benefit from the availability of staff and enjoy the diversity of interaction and activity that the staff team has to offer. Staff are deployed well to meet the individual needs of the young people.

Young people's records are up to date and reflect their daily experience. The home has procedures in place for informing placing authorities, carers and Ofsted of incidents that occur. This allows consideration to be given to any action that may be necessary to safeguard the welfare of young people. Full information is shared with external agencies and carers.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.