

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC018238
Inspection date	10/09/2013
Inspector	Simon Morley
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	29/11/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This is a privately owned children's home. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for one young person with emotional or behavioural difficulties.

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**.

Young people achieve positive outcomes in many key aspects of their lives. They benefit from being well looked after by caring supportive staff. Staff work hard to develop good relationships with young people in their care which helps them progress well.

Staff are competent and ample in number to provide a good quality service. This is backed up by strong management arrangements, which make sure staff are well trained. Young people are looked after safely in this home. The manager liaises effectively with other safeguarding agencies and staff are good at fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities.

Young people's individual needs are central to the running of the service. Care planning and the quality of care practice reflect this. Young people are listened to and they have a very good say in their care and what happens in the home. Close monitoring of care practice and young people's progress enables the manager to effectively review care plans and risk assessments. This ensures young people remain safe and enjoy good quality care.

There were no required improvements as a result of this inspection.

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Given their starting points on admission to the home, young people benefit from

good outcomes achieved from living in the home. One independent reviewing office commented that a young person 'be commended for his achievements'.

Young people make significant progress with their social skills and behaviour. Young people with a past history of offences, do not re-offend and are able to stay out of trouble with the police and youth justice system. This increases their chances of a successful transition to adulthood. Young people's improved social skills have helped them to participate in meetings about their care, which they have not done in the past. Young people also feel more confident in making friends with peers at college and with their neighbours. Having a wider social network improves young people's leisure opportunities. Young people enjoy walking the neighbours dog and socialising with friends.

Young people develop their independence skills and learn how to look after themselves. Compared to their starting point on admission young people successfully learn shopping and cooking skills and travel independently. Young people start to make their own health care decisions while continuing to benefit from advice and guidance on healthy eating, sexual health and substance misuse.

Young people's educational development and achievement is much better in relation to their starting points. They have good attendance with their further education and have been successful at interviews and being accepted for an apprenticeship.

Quality of care

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

Young people enjoy good, supportive relationships with staff. Staff work hard to build up these relationships and give young people the space and time to open up. Trusting and caring relationships help young people to discuss sensitive aspects of their lives. Staff are good at encouraging young people to engage in these discussions helping them gain some insight and understanding into their behaviour and grow in maturity.

There are individual incentives for young people that help them achieve identified goals. Young people can choose these own incentives for example trips to theme parks. Staff use incentives and their people skills to promote good behaviour. Staff use their knowledge and understanding of young people to effectively support young people to improve their behaviour. They communicate well with young people and avoid escalation of poor behaviours by negotiation, discussion and good humour. Both young people and parents have complimented the home on how well their behaviour has improved. One independent reviewing officer commented 'we are pleasantly surprised with the placement' with regard to young people's progress, particularly in their behaviour.

Young people's views are included in all aspects of the planning and review process and how the home is run. They are empowered to put their views forward and the staff are good at responding to this. Young people receive clear explanations about

decisions. If young people are not happy about something, the staff team do their best to resolve the issue. This helps to ensure that young people's views, wishes and feelings remain central to care practice. Young people choose what activities they wish to engage in, what they wish to eat, and how to personalise their bedrooms. Young people particularly like swimming, walking and bike riding which they do frequently.

Comprehensive, well-written individual care plans give a detailed overview of young people's diverse needs. Staff have successfully implemented these plans enabling young people to make good progress in their lives. In particular staff work well with a range of agencies, including health services, education, youth justice and the police. This provides young people specific support to meet individual needs such as training, seeking employment, mental health needs, and reduction in offending behaviour.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people are safe and well cared for. Staff give their safety a high priority. Care planning includes detailed risk management arrangements. This promotes young people's independence while ensuring there are good measures in place to reduce risks. As circumstances change risk management is reviewed to keep up with young people's progress and changing needs.

Young people rarely go missing from the home. When they do, staff ensure their safety as far as possible.

Regular contact is made with young people via mobile telephones and if staff know where they have gone they will go and check young people are safe. There is good safeguarding practice and the appropriate agencies are also notified in line with local police protocols. There are additional measures if needed to respond to concerns about child exploitation. The manager has developed good working relationships with other agencies responsible for safeguarding young people. This helps ensure a thorough approach to keeping young people safe.

Staff openly discuss issues with young people and effective key working helps them to explore options and the impact of their behaviour on their health, safety and well-being. Staff understand young people's individual vulnerabilities which may expose them to risk and take action to minimise this. Staff receive support and training on a range of safeguarding issues which ensures they are alert to any child protection concerns.

There are good safety procedures for dealing with visitors, vetting new staff and maintaining the home, which helps protect the welfare, health and safety of young people in the home.

Leadership and management

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

The home has an experienced Registered Manager providing strong leadership. This ensures the home is managed effectively in young people's best interests. Staff are supported well through regular supervision, training and team meetings. There is a good training and development programme making sure young people are looked after by qualified and experienced staff.

The manager and staff work well together through use of good communication, consistency in care practice and regular review of young people's needs and progress. There is good cooperation with other agencies, keeping key professionals up to date and young people benefit from effective multi-agency working. One independent reviewing officer commented, 'staff reports are fine and they are prepared for meetings'.

There are well developed systems for monitoring the quality of care provided. This gives the manager a good insight into the home's strengths and where areas of practice or development may need to improve.

Since the last inspection the provider has improved the way the management of the home is monitored, particularly with respect to how staff are supporting young people to enjoy and achieve. The good quality of monitoring ensures that the home fulfils its Statement of Purpose and maintains high standards of care for young people.

Young people live in a home that is spacious and well maintained and suitably resourced. The manager and provider strive to ensure that good relationships are maintained within the local community. Where any concerns have been raised there has been a prompt response keeping good relationships with the neighbours.

Young people's records give them a thorough account of events, their achievements and decisions made during their time at the home. This helps in their understanding about the time spent at the home.

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.