

## Inspection report for Children's Home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC020193       |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 05/11/2010     |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Jacqui Gosling |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Key            |

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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.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

### The inspection judgements and what they mean

|               |                                                               |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Outstanding:  | this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality |
| Good:         | this aspect of the provision is strong                        |
| Satisfactory: | this aspect of the provision is sound                         |
| Inadequate:   | this aspect of the provision is not good enough               |

## **Service information**

### **Brief description of the service**

This school is situated in a village in a rural location approximately five miles from the nearest town. It provides residential care facilities for up to 23 boarders and several day students from various areas of the United Kingdom. The children and young people who live at the school have varying degrees of learning disability, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, autism and/or autistic spectrum disorder and some with associated attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The ethos of the school is based on individualised support to children and young people. The school works with a multi-disciplinary approach and employs a nurse, occupational therapist and speech and language therapists.

The the school is housed in a listed building and the care units are divided between five areas of the school. The children and young people use leisure facilities in the nearby towns. Currently 17 young people are living here.

### **Summary**

The overall quality rating is good.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

At this unannounced key inspection, all key standards in all outcome areas were assessed. One young person gave their view of living here. A parent visiting the home also spoke very positively of the support the home offers her child. Many parents and social workers completed pre inspection questionnaires and their views are included in the report.

The home provides an excellent standard of care. Young people enjoy positive relationships with staff; this helps them to feel settled and to make good progress. Staff are consistent in their approach to young people and behaviour is managed well.

Young people are cared for safely by a competent team of staff, who work well together and who are supported by clear policies and procedures, supervision and relevant training. Staff encourage young people to develop a healthy lifestyle and ensure that they are supported to pursue their education and achieve to their individual potential. Staff also support young people in maintaining positive relationships with their families and significant others.

One recommendation was made at this inspection; this refers to updating the Statement of Purpose.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Three recommendations were made at the last inspection.

The provision was asked to ensure that the home is maintained in good structural repair, with particular reference to some of the bathrooms. The home has been proactive and this work is ongoing.

The provision was also asked to ensure that the nurse has access to a named senior nurse or doctor for professional guidance and consultation. Since the last inspection the nurse has resigned and the home is now advertising this post.

The last recommendation was to ensure that there is a clear written policy, procedures and guidance for staff based on a code of conduct setting out the control, disciplinary and restraint measures permitted, in relation to the need to hold a door shut, which may involve the restriction of liberty for children who are accommodated. This has been fully addressed by the manager. There is a clear policy in place and it is included in the home's Statement of Purpose.

## **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

The promotion of young people's health is excellent. Clear health plans, based on detailed initial assessments, ensure that the health requirements of young people are known to staff. This ensures that they receive the support they need to promote their good health. Plans are developed and are monitored regularly to make sure that information is up to date and accurate.

Young people are registered with a doctor, dentist and optician when they are admitted to the home and are supported at health appointments. Staff actively encourage young people to live healthy lives. Young people are accessing regular, therapeutic support that matches their identified needs.

Young people are provided with well balanced, nutritious meals. They are involved in drawing up the menus and can put forward ideas and suggestions for food they would like to eat. They have opportunities to plan and prepare some meals in their own kitchenettes. Staff complete required training to ensure the kitchen is a safe and healthy environment. The home received a maximum five star rating from the environmental health inspector earlier this year.

There are robust systems for the safe storage and delivery of medication, which protect young people. Staff are appropriately trained, procedures are clear and medication is safely stored in a locked cabinet. The recording system is effective and records are regularly monitored to ensure that they are accurate.

The manager ensures all staff are trained in the delivery of first aid, so that they

have a clear understanding of how to care for young people in an emergency. Appropriate looked after child consent for medical intervention has been obtained.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The home has very effective policies, procedures and care practices, which ensure that young people are cared for safely. For example, robust individual risk assessments and support plans ensure that staff have appropriate strategies in place to protect the young people. Young people say that they 'feel safe' in the home. They are protected from potential abuse because staff are properly trained and have a good understanding of the home's procedures for reporting and managing safeguarding concerns.

Young people say that they do not believe that bullying is an issue in the home, but that if there is a problem, 'staff deal with it'. To protect young people, staff encourage young people to understand the impact of bullying on others.

The privacy and confidentiality of young people is properly respected. Young people have individual bedrooms, where they can be private and where they can keep their possessions safe. Young people are encouraged to respect each other's personal space. Records are held securely and staff have a good understanding of issues of confidentiality.

Complaints are managed very well. There is an effective system in place to record any concerns or complaints from young people, parents, or professionals. There is clear evidence that they feel confident about letting staff know if they are unhappy with any aspect of their care.

None of the young people who stay at the home go out alone. All are accompanied by at least one member of staff. Individual and environmental risk assessments are conducted and regularly reviewed. This enables staff to be well-informed about each young person in their care to ensure they are appropriately safeguarded. There have been no incidents of young people being absent from the home without authority.

There is a strong emphasis in the home on recognising positive behaviour and effort. Staff develop positive relationships with young people and help them to learn to manage their own behaviour in a way that is socially acceptable. Staff are trained to manage challenging behaviour including the use of restraints. The records of physical restraint are clear and show how staff try to de-escalate and use deflection techniques effectively. This indicates that staff are successful in the positive way that they work with young people.

The management of health and safety processes is excellent. This helps to protect young people from the risk of harm or injury in the home. Equipment and installations are serviced regularly and there are regular fire safety tests. Young people take part in regular evacuation drills so that they understand what to do in

the event of a fire or other emergency. Risk assessments on the environment and on activities that young people may be involved in are robust and are regularly reviewed to make sure that information is up to date. Portable appliance testing is very robust.

There are effective procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff. These ensure that all staff are thoroughly vetted before they start work. The identity of all visitors to the home is checked before they are allowed access to the home and grounds. These robust systems protect young people as they ensure that unauthorised individuals are not able to gain access to the home.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Young people benefit by having their unique needs thoroughly assessed and met. Staff members know all of the young people very well and implement individual care plans in a thorough and consistent manner. Initial assessments take into account each child's own social, economic and ethnic backgrounds. The staff are sensitive to these and appropriate referrals are made for ongoing therapy, intervention and support. Staff recognise that the young people use different methods of communication and aids.

Staff actively promote the inclusion of young people in the home's daily routines and events. Young people are supported to access and attend various community-based activities and venues according to their own choices and preferences. Staff support young people to develop their own interests and hobbies, for example, youth club. The staff review and update assessments so they are informed about what they can do to reduce potential risks to young people.

Young people's educational progress at the school is actively supported by the residential provision. Young people explore their potential and develop their personal interests because staff work in an encouraging and supportive manner. Staff are very positive about the value of education. Daily attendance at school is an expected part of the life of the home and staff work hard to help young people achieve this. Consequently, the care, learning opportunities and activities are excellent. The home has a good transport provision, which meets the needs of the young people.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

The young people are enabled by the good practice of staff to contribute effectively to their care. Each young person has a clearly written placement plan that identifies their needs and any potential risks. The care plan is updated and a report is written and forwarded to the young person's social worker regularly. Regular meetings are held to assess young people's progress and development. There are clear contact details recorded and young people are provided with practical support to ensure that where possible, contact with family is maintained.

The home's referral system enables the manager to fully assess the needs of the young people concerned, and take into account the likely effects of their admission upon the existing group of residents. Admissions to the home are planned and the young person, and their family where appropriate are involved in that planning. Therefore, young people are able to move into the home in a planned and sensitive manner.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Children live in a safe and appropriately maintained environment where communal areas are decorated and furnished to a satisfactory standard. Rooms are homely and comfortable and provide good communal space for the young people. Bedrooms are of a good size and are personalised to varying standards by their occupants. Toilet and bathing facilities are of a good standard and afford good privacy. The home's grounds are spacious and appropriately maintained offering sufficient levels of communal space for the young people to have choices regarding their recreational and leisure time.

Young people say they like their bedrooms and spoke of how they choose posters to decorate them. They are happy with the standard of accommodation, have comfortable beds to sleep in and like living in the home. Standards of cleanliness and hygiene are high throughout the home and no safety hazards are evident.

Young people receive pocket money on a sliding age scale and clear records of all transactions are kept by staff. They also receive a clothing allowance and have access to personal requisites such as toiletries. Young people are well presented in clothes appropriate to their age and of their choosing.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The home has a clear Statement of Purpose, however, it does not fully comply with national minimum standards. The young people receive a children's guide when they are accommodated at the home. This is personalised for them individually and gives them clear information on the expectations of the home.

Staff receive a thorough induction into the home, which promotes safe practice. Staff are offered a range of training to give them the skills and knowledge to meet young people's needs. Staff have completed the National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Caring for Young People or are working towards it.

The home is appropriately staffed in line with the Statement of Purpose. Staff on duty are supported by senior staff and a manager is always on call to offer support and give guidance. The staff are supported in their practice through regular

supervision and staff meetings where they can reflect on practice issues. The staff team are an established and experienced group who work in a professional, committed and competent manner, enabling the home to meet its aims and objectives.

There is an effective quality assurance system in place to promote the raising of standards. This includes monitoring visits and an internal monitoring system completed by the manager. Regulation 33 monthly visits occur and reports on the visits are forwarded to the home and to Ofsted as required.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. The staff are a diverse care team. They are knowledgeable and able to meet the diverse needs of the young people accommodated. Staff are supportive of the home's management and ethos. Staff are clear that the provision has full regard for equality and diversity issues and that no discriminatory attitudes or practices exist within the service.

Documentation relating to young people is detailed and recording is of a good standard. Files provide a secure record of young people's needs, development, progress and history. Records are kept up to date and stored securely and young people are encouraged to contribute to their files. Information in young people's files is cross referenced with other records kept in the home, so that every young person has a clear history of their time in care and in this placement, to which they can have access.

## **What must be done to secure future improvement?**

### **Recommendations**

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

- ensure the statement of purpose provides all the information required in Schedule 1, specifically details of staffing and their qualifications (NMS 1.2)