

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Martha Nethaway
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home provides care and accommodation for up to three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, aged between eight and 17 years. The home is owned by a private childcare 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**.

The home is effective and provides well planned care. Young people are safe and feel safe. Young people are enjoying good outcomes in relation to their welfare, safety, health, education and preparation for independence. Young people's views and opinions are regularly sought. This is through house meetings and one-to-one meetings with staff. They are well engaged in the activities of the home.

Young people form positive working relationships with staff. Young people's diverse needs are well served. Staff are respectful and genuine in their work and approach with young people. Leadership and management at the home are good. The performance of the home is clearly tracked and positive action is taken to secure improvement.

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people's level of progress and development is good. They are able to develop and form stable relationships with staff. Young people respond positively to consistent support which meets their needs. They learn to trust staff. One young person commented, 'Staff have helped me to see things differently. I am in a much better place than when I first came here.' As a result, this promotes stable placements and nurturing relationships.

Young people's health is good. They are willing to participate in counselling and

therapy sessions, tailored to their individual needs. Over time, young people make good progress and learn to deal with trauma. As a result, their self-esteem increases. Young people are further protected because they regularly attend their doctor, dentist and optician appointments. One young person commented, 'I used to smoke but now I don't.' This is attributed to young people learning effectively about the negative effects of smoking on their health and well-being.

All young people are attending college and making good progress. Their attendance is good. One young person commented, 'We are expected to get the bus to and from college.' This bolsters young people's learning by instilling confidence and maturity. Another young person commented, 'I am really interested in art and drama and this is something that I might do in the future.' Consequently, young people know and understand that their education is important and this is fostering a desire to achieve.

Young people are encouraged and supported to take part in the running of the home. This mainly achieved through regular house meetings. They regularly air their views about food, menus and activities. Staff always act on young people's feedback. Young people are benefiting from appropriate contact with family and friends. Young people are protected because there is effective scrutiny of all contact arrangements and a good account is taken of any risks.

All young people are effectively prepared for independence. They are all completing a personalised independence programme. Young people are learning very effectively how to manage weekly budgets for food and clothes shopping. One young person commented, 'I do my shopping on my way home from college and I am good at spotting deals.' As a result, they learn key life skills. In addition, all young people are encouraged to use public transport in preparation toward their independence.

Quality of care

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

Young people are living in an environment that is harmonious and welcoming. They all enjoy positive and effective working relationships with staff. One young person commented, 'I would rate the home highly.' One social worker's comment reflects this, 'The young person's placement is excellent and she is achieving well. The staff have worked really hard to achieve this level of success.' Complaints are effectively and efficiently managed. Young people understand how to make a complaint and regularly do so with confidence. Young people know and understand that all concerns are taken seriously and acted upon. As a result, this good practice safeguards young people's welfare at all times.

Care planning and implementation is good. All young people are cared for in line with their individual placement plan. One key worker commented: 'The young person knows what she is working towards and is well motivated to achieve. There are incentives that recognise progress and development.' Young people are making good progress in all aspects of their lives including health, social development, education and independence.

Young people are encouraged to take part in recreational activities. They are members of their local gym and join their local sports club. As a result, this improves young people's fitness and helps young people find sports, games and exercise that most appeals to them.

Young people's needs relating to their cultural background and personal identity are identified and positively addressed in both daily living and care planning. Young people are encouraged to be aware of their rights and are supported to exercise them by staff. The home actively encourages contact with the children's rights officer and advocates. As a result, young people's rights are secured and their interests represented.

The home is appropriately located, designed and maintained. All young people enjoy having their own bedrooms decorated to reflect their culture and personal taste. One young person commented, 'It's a great home to live in and it's big enough to have our own space. My bedroom is lovely and I like it.'

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people's safety and welfare is good. They say they are safe and feel safe. Staff are appropriately trained and effectively implement overarching procedures in safeguarding, behaviour management and health and safety. Staff are able to provide good help and protection. Meeting young people's needs is at the forefront of their practice. Consequently, staff meet their obligation to promote young people's welfare at all times.

Young people do not go missing from the home. Young people are protected because staff diligently communicate the importance of keeping safe. They learn about not placing themselves in harm or danger. The home has effective policies and procedures for when, and if, a young person goes missing.

Young people's behaviour is positively managed, through consistent and clear boundaries. Young people learn how to make positive choices. Staff regularly give positive praise, rewards and incentives, such as activities and vouchers. Consequently, young people develop socially acceptable behaviour. For example, there is a marked reduction in the number of physical interventions and this is attributed to the successful behavioural strategies adopted by staff at the home .

The home's recruitment of staff is good. In all cases the home consistently follows the safe recruitment and selection process. As a result, staff are safe to work with vulnerable young people. The management of health and safety is good. All young people have a personalised risk assessment that is reviewed regularly. The home addresses health and safety properly through staff training, comprehensive information, policies and procedures. Young people are additionally protected because they regularly take part in fire evacuation drills so that they know what to

do in the event of an emergency.

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 also manages another small children's home for this company. They provide good managerial oversight of the home and show clear passion and conviction in seeking good care. This is further bolstered by the good practice of senior staff. The Registered Manager is well supported by an external line manager who visits and is in regular contact with the home. The home is well resourced. Ofsted have received no complaints about the home since the last inspection.

The home delivers good residential care experiences for young people and has taken action in respect of previous requirements and recommendations. Good progress has been achieved with the home implementing their development plan and through improved monitoring of the quality of care. For example, young people's suggestion of adopting recycling is now taking place at the home. The home's practice is consistent with stated aims outlined in the revised Statement of Purpose. Young people are benefiting from individualised support and help and now have use of a computer for homework. Young people continue to make progress and improvements with their health, education and independence training. This is echoed by a social workers comment, 'A real strength of the home is the great attention given young people and working for their best interests.'

Staffing arrangements are good and this means that young people are provided with good quality care. Staff are well supervised and supported. Staff meetings are taking place consistently. Good arrangements are in place for key mandatory training. In addition, extra professional training is being provided on Autism and behaviour management. Over half the staff team are professionally trained and the remaining staff are registered to complete their professional training. Records are well managed at the home. They encompass a coordinated approach and take full account of the holistic needs of young people. As a result, young people have correctly planned and effectively provided care.

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.