

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC020630
Inspection date	15/10/2013
Inspector	Suzanne Young
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	28/01/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is a two-bedded children's home providing services for young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is run by a private company.

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**.

This home impacts positively on young people's lives. As a result young people make good progress in relation to their starting points. Staff provide high quality support to young people. This is achieved by highly individualised care planning which meets the needs of young people. Staff are good at promoting positive behaviour with young people. As a result, instances of negative behaviour necessitating the use of physical intervention and sanctions are low. Young people develop good quality relationships with staff and are supported to be safe.

The home is managed well. Quality assurance systems ensure management have a clear understanding of the strengths and weakness of the home. This helps drive improvement in the running of the service and outcomes for young people.

The home is well maintained. It is comfortable and warm. Young people can personalise their bedrooms and can significantly influence the running of the home and the delivery of their care.

As a result of this inspection one requirement and one recommendation has been made. These relate to the Statement of Purpose and young people's guide.

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
4 (2001)	ensure the Statement of Purpose includes the age-range of young people for who the home intends to accommodate. (Regulation 4(1) Schedule1)	31/10/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure the young person's guide includes how a young person can contact their Independent Reviewing Officer. (NMS 13.5)

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people are achieving good outcomes in all areas of their development. One placing social worker stated, 'Since placed the young person has come a long way.' Young people are in particular making good progress in terms of their self-esteem, education and independence skills. Young people are developing in their confidence and self-esteem. This is maintained through building up positive and trusting relationships with staff. One young person commented, 'I love the activities and love being around staff.'

Young people, some of who have previously had very poor school attendance, are attending college. They are achieving in their chosen subjects and have succeeded in obtaining recognised qualifications. Young people also develop practical and life skills to help prepare them for independence. They have individual independence plans which cover all areas of independent living, such as, household management, health, transport and finance. On leaving the home many young people have continue in their college courses and some have obtained employment. As a result, young people gain in confidence while living in the home and make good progress in readiness for adult life.

Young people are in good health and are beginning to take responsibility for their own health. Risk taking behaviours by young people are few. When these do occur staff manage these well. They help young people to gain understanding and consequences of their actions. Young people currently in the home do not engage in smoking or drug misuse. They are engaging in activities in the community which help to promote a healthy lifestyle. For instance, one young person has taken part in the race for life and another joined a trampoline club in the local area. Young people regularly attend health appointments and engage with staff in key worker sessions regarding emotional and sexual health. As a consequence, young people are

achieving positive outcomes with regard to their physical, emotional and psychological health.

Quality of care

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

Staff provide good quality of care to young people. Young people feel secure and are aware that staff are concerned about their wellbeing and development. One young person commented, 'I have loved living here, it is the best placement I have ever been in.' Parents are also happy about the quality of care provided by staff. One parent commented, 'I have been so happy with the care that has been given to my daughter.' As a result young people develop in confidence and self-esteem.

Staff actively promote the education and health of young people. They source college placements and develop positive relationships with college professionals ensuring young people can access and maintain the courses of their choice. They also support young people and help them to become aware of how to keep themselves healthy through regular key worker sessions. Staff work with health professionals, such as, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) to ensure young people receive the health care they need. As a result, young people are beginning to have an awareness of health living and are achieving in colleges in the areas of their choice.

Young people know how to make a complaint. All complaints have been dealt with in a timely and sensitive manner.

Staff provide young people with a high level of personalised care. Individual placement plans are tailored to meet the specific needs of each young person and are of a good quality. Young people's objectives are reviewed monthly and the plans for their care are updated accordingly. These, together with individualised behaviour management strategies, give staff a good direction to work with young people. Staff ensure young people are fully involved in the planning and review of their care. Young people sign their placement plans and topics for keyworker sessions are chosen in partnership with them. This helps ensure young people become fully engaged and committed to the care being provided for them.

Staff ensure the cultural and religious needs of young people are promoted and addressed through daily living. For instance, young people are taken to church by members of staff and shopping to buy culturally appropriate hair and skin products. All members of staff and young people get involved in cultural themed evenings where they dress up and cook food from the country being celebrated. This helps young people to develop a knowledge and understanding of their culture and promote a positive awareness of other cultures. Staff also support young people to maintain their identity by actively encouraging contact with birth families via telephone, video link and through visits home.

The views of young people significantly influence the running of the home through

planning activities, meals and choosing the décor for their bedrooms and living areas. Young people are also able contribute items to newsletters and attend regional consultation groups. On an annual basis one young person is supported to attend the organisation's board meeting in London. As a consequence, young people are able to contribute to and influence the running of the home and wider organisation.

Young people live in a home which is warm, comfortable and well maintained. The décor and furnishings are of a good standard. Young people each have their own bathroom and can personalise their bedrooms to their individual tastes.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people are living in a safe and stable home. Young people report that they feel safe. Bullying is a rare occurrence. Staff are proactive in ensuring young people are safe and actively intervene if instances of bullying occur.

There are detailed and robust behaviour management plans for each young person linked to comprehensive risk assessments. All staff read young people's risk assessments prior to taking them out on any activity. This means staff have a good knowledge of each young person and the strategies to employ in managing their behaviour.

Staff receive regular safeguarding training and are aware of how to access the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. As a consequence, they have a good understanding of the action to take should they have any concerns about a young person's safety or well-being.

Staff promote positive behaviour through developing strong and trusting relationships with young people. As a result, the instances of physical intervention are very low. There has been only one restraint since the last inspection and no sanctions imposed. When any restraint is used this is subject to scrutiny by senior managers and if necessary by physical intervention trainers. This ensures all instances of physical restraint is correctly used to prevent injury to young people. The frequencies in which young people go missing are also very low. When these do occur staff follow procedures and work in partnership with police, social workers and families to reduce the risk to young people.

The home environment is physically safe and secure. All fire and health and safety checks are completed regularly. Environmental risk assessments are completed and reviewed as required. Staff and young people complete fire awareness training and participate in monthly fire drills to ensure they can evacuate the home in an emergency. Young people are also kept safe by robust recruitment processes completed by the organisation. This helps prevent unsuitable people from being recruited.

Leadership and management

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

The Registered Manager has very recently returned to managing the home having been seconded to another home within the organisation. One recommendation made at the last inspection has been met. Staff vetting procedures are conducted and evidenced as required.

The home has a development plan in place which is reviewed on an annual basis. Quality assurance systems have been developed which monitor the home's performance and highlight areas for development. The manager monitors the activities of the home monthly and this is evaluated twice a year. This ensures the manager continues to have a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and develops the quality of care for young people accordingly.

Placing social workers are complementary about the communication they receive from the home. One placing social worker commented, 'Staff keep in contact with me well. I am updated of incidents. Staff are quick to let me know.'

The home's Statement of Purpose and young people's welcome guide is user friendly and gives clear information regarding the home. However, the Statement of Purpose does not explicitly state the age range of young people the home intends to accommodate. There is also a shortfall in the young people's guide as it does not state the name and contact details of young people's independent reviewing officers. This could prevent young people from seeking independent advice and guidance.

The home employs a sufficient number of staff to meet the needs of the young people. The staff team are very stable and experienced. At the time of the inspection the home had two vacancies. This is well managed by the staff team and at the time of the inspection these posts were being actively recruited to. The home is also able to call on staff within the organisation to provide cover when required.

Staff are qualified and receive a good level of training to meet the needs of the young people living in the home. One member of staff commented, 'Training needs are always kept up to date, and help to enhance personal and professional development.' As a result, staff are up to date with legislative developments and provide a good quality of care for young people. Staff receive regular supervision on a one-to-one basis and attend staff meetings on a monthly basis. This ensures staff are well supported and challenged to enable them to meet the needs of young people in the home.

Young people's records are clear. Development and progress are well recorded and contribute to an understanding of the young person's life.

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.