

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Anthony Kyem
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is registered with Ofsted to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people of either sex, aged between 11 and 17 years, who may be experiencing emotional or behavioural difficulties. The home is owned by a private 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**.

Young people make good progress in relation to their starting points. They benefit from well-planned care that is tailored to meet their particular needs as individuals. They receive extensive support to promote their emotional resilience and they enjoy positive relationships with staff. Young people benefit from continuity of care to help them to sustain their positive attachments.

Young people said, 'It's good, everything's really good. It's a good care home, well, the best one I've been to...The best thing is the staff are better and the house is better... I like it here. It's a good home. I want to stay here.'

A parent said, 'They're a good bunch, not a bad word to say about them. I get weekly updates.'

A social worker said, 'I have no issues at all. They deal with (child X) quite well. He gets the care he responds to and he appears a lot calmer.'

Staff are very enthusiastic about their roles and their efforts are channelled effectively. They help young people to move on from their past experiences and they promote their positive self-view. Staff actively involve young people in the running of the home to encourage their positive contribution. Consequently, young people feel consulted, involved, valued, respected and listened to. Young people's welfare and safety is the home's key priority. Young people are kept safe and feel safe.

As a result of this inspection there are a small number of recommendations made in relation to improving recording of missing from home's records, ensuring young people attend their routine health appointments, and completing the garden project and the redecoration of the home.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure missing from home's records are accurately recorded (NMS 5.10)
- ensure young people attend their routine health appointments at suitable intervals (NMS 6.4)
- ensure the home's garden project and the programme of redecoration is completed. (NMS 10.3)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people receive extensive support to promote their positive progress. Young people are supported to develop a positive self-view to help them recognise their own strengths and positive attributes. Staff have a caring and positive attitude. They are dedicated and committed to improving outcomes for all young people. Young people benefit from contact with their friends and families to help them sustain their positive relationships.

Young people are registered with a doctor, dentist and optician. They have access to specialist support, if necessary. Young people's health needs are met and they have access to a range of specialist services to promote their health and well-being. Young people are encouraged to attend their routine health appointments. However, there are occasions when young people fail to keep their medical appointments. As a result, they may not receive the support they need to secure their positive health. Young people are encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle through healthy eating, diet and physical exercise.

Young people are involved successfully in education. Their educational attendance has improved and they continue to make good progress in relation to their starting points. There are clear expectations for young people to attend school or alternative provision. Those of school-leaving age engage in positive activities to pursue their aspirations and goals.

Staff are proactive in ensuring young people have the necessary skills to prepare

them for adulthood. Young people receive life skills training to help them manage all aspects of daily living. They benefit from pathway plans to promote their smooth transition to adulthood. They receive good support to take controlled risks and, if they do make mistakes, staff are always there to help young people learn from them.

Quality of care

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

Young people benefit from positive relationships with staff and with each other. They benefit from a vibrant atmosphere where staff work enthusiastically to maintain a harmonious environment.

Young people know how to make a complaint, and their complaints and concerns are treated seriously. As a result, young people have faith that staff will always act on their concerns. Young people are fully involved in the running of the home and they are able to influence the way in which their lives are being managed. As a result, young people feel their views, feelings and opinions are listened to.

Young people's needs are assessed comprehensively. Staff have a high level of awareness of young people's needs, social backgrounds and histories. Staff involve young people in their care to help them make a positive contribution. Young people's needs are promoted effectively and this is reflected in their positive progress.

Young people benefit from a diverse range of enjoyable activities to develop their social interests, friendships and hobbies. The home benefits from a central location where there is good access to local amenities. The home is currently undergoing a programme of redecoration. However, plans to finish a garden project have been hindered due to bad weather conditions. The upper level of the home is looking slightly tired and lacks character in comparison to other parts of the home. Overall, young people benefit from a comfortable and homely environment.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Staff protect young people from abuse, bullying and exploitation. Risks associated with young people are identified clearly and staff use young people's risk assessments and behaviour management strategies to promote their physical safety.

There is evidence to show that young people's risk taking behaviours are reducing as a result of the positive support provided to them. Staff know how to promote young people's safe return if they are missing and the frequency of young people going missing has reduced overtime. The recording of some missing from care records could be improved to ensure an accurate account of the occurrence is described.

Young people are taught to behave responsibly and their positive behaviour is rewarded to promote their self-esteem. The use of sanctions and restraint is rare.

Restraint is only ever used as a last resort to protect young people from suffering harm, accident or injury. Sanctions are used proportionally to teach young people that there are consequences to their negative actions. As a result, young people are less likely to engage in anti-social behaviour.

There are no current concerns in relation to young people placing themselves at risk of significant harm. Staff are trained in child protection so they know how to handle allegations or suspected abuse. Staff who work with young people are carefully vetted to ensure young people are protected from unsuitable people.

The home provides young people with a physically safe and secure environment. Health and safety is taken seriously. Staff ensure the premises are free from hazards and that regular fire drills are held. Fire fighting equipment, gas and portable electrical appliances are all professionally serviced to promote environmental safety.

Leadership and management

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

There were no requirements made at the last inspection. The one recommendation made at the previous visit has been completed to show the action taken to address any shortfalls identified as part of external monitoring visits. There have been no complaints raised about the service since the previous inspection. The home notifies the appropriate authorities of all significant events to ensure appropriate action is taken following any significant incident. As a result, young people's welfare and safety is promoted effectively.

The home employs a full-time permanent Registered Manager to oversee the day to day operations of the home. The manager regularly takes time to consult with young people as part of the wider systems used to monitor the standards and quality of young people's care. As a result, good use is made of the home's monitoring activities.

The manager promotes the development and improvement of the service and a written development plan is in place. Young people benefit from a home that is managed efficiently where the quality of young people's is monitored effectively. Young people benefit from qualified, skilled and experienced staff who have access to good quality training to enable them to develop their skills and keep up to date with professional practice.

Information the home keeps about young people is recorded clearly and this provides young people with the opportunity to reflect back on their experiences and review their plans and progress. The home meets the aims and objectives of its Statement of Purpose. The home has a proven track record based on its current performance and its previous inspection history.

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.