

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, run by a company, provides care and accommodation for up to four young people of either sex from 11 to 17 years of age. The purpose of the home is to assist young people to return home, wherever possible, or to prepare young people for their independence.

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 individual starting points. They receive encouragement and support to promote their resilience to enable them cope with life's challenges. They learn to manage their feelings with greater self-control so they are better prepared to adapt to stressful situations and manage them responsibly. Young people enjoy living at the home where they are kept safe and feel safe.

Young people said: 'I like the independence side of things as I find it better having my own space...The staff are sound. They're not too strict and they're really down to earth...I like everything about it...I haven't had one problem since being here. They got me loads of stuff even before I came to live here...They're going to pay for my provisional driving licence and for me to have driving lessons.'

A social worker said, 'It's going really good for him at the moment. It's a really good placement for X, it's working well for him. I've found them to be very good.'

Young people benefit from a good standard of care that promotes their needs effectively. They benefit from good relationships with staff and they receive continuity of care to enable them to sustain their positive attachments. Young people are familiar with, and trust, the adults who support them.

Staff involve young people in the running of the home to enable their positive contribution. As a result, young people feel listened to because staff treat their views

and opinions seriously. A young person who previously lived at the home writes: 'My time at the home was one of the best. I have met new people and new friends...I have improved in my health and have become a lot fitter...I am really glad I have met some really decent staff who can relate to people like me.'

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people form, build and develop positive relationships with staff. They respond positively to the care and support provided to them. Staff support young people to make positive choices and they promote their positive self-view. They teach young people to recognise their own strengths and positive attributes. Consequently, young people develop greater self-esteem and they learn to re-engage in positive activities.

Young people benefit from good attendance at school or alternative provision. Those of school leaving age are engaged in further education or training to enable them to learn and achieve, develop new skills to improve their employment opportunities. Young people are encouraged to develop their particular interests to help them develop friendships and promote their positive contribution in the community.

Young people enjoy the activities provided to them. There is a good balance between young people's free and organised time to alleviate boredom and isolation. Young people confirm there are always staff available for them to turn to for support, in times of need. A young person said, 'I can just invite them in for a brew and a chat.'

Young people benefit from pathway plans which staff use to promote their planned transition to adulthood. They receive encouragement, advice and support to complete a broad range of independent living tasks to develop their life skills and increase their self-confidence. Young people are fully involved in all aspects of daily living. They are taught to shop, prepare and cook their own meals. As a result, young people acquire a range of skills that will benefit them in later life.

Young people benefit from contact with their friends and families to help them sustain their valued relationships. Staff work enthusiastically with young people's social workers and families to ensure that contact is a positive experience. Young people enjoy contact and staff promote it.

Quality of care

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

Staff ensure young people enjoy positive health. They encourage young people to lead a healthy lifestyle by teaching them the value and importance of healthy eating, diet and physical exercise. Young people are registered with appropriate health services and staff promote and encourage their attendance with all routine health appointments. This ensures young people receive the support they need to sustain good health.

The home provides young people with a healthy environment. Staff are trained to provide emergency treatment so they know how to administer first aid should young people require it. Staff promote young people's health by ensuring the procedures for the administration of medication are managed safely. Young people receive information and advice about the risks associated with using drugs and alcohol to develop their awareness of relevant health issues. Specialist support is available for young people who require it to promote their sexual health, psychological and emotional well-being.

Young people benefit from positive relationships with staff and they enjoy staff's company. They are routinely involved in the running of the home to enable them to contribute to everyday decisions. Young people feel their views and opinions are taken seriously. They know how to make a complaint but none have done so since the previous inspection.

Young people's needs are assessed comprehensively. They benefit from well-planned care that is tailored to meet their specific needs as individuals. Young people's needs in relation to gender, culture and identity are all positively addressed and promoted both within care planning and daily living. Staff place the safety of all young people at the centre of their practice. They work with a range of professional agencies to promote young people safety, ensuring they receive the support they need in all aspects of their lives.

The home's location provides young people with good access to local amenities. The physical environment is safe, secure and suitable. The home has been recently re-decorated to improve its physical appearance in making the home a more comfortably place for young people to live. The physical characteristics of the home are conducive to the purpose of promoting young people's independence. For example, some young people benefit from having their own self-contained bedsits to promote their independence.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people are protected from neglect, abuse, bullying, harassment and exploitation. They are kept safe and feel safe. Their behaviours are assessed carefully and risks associated with their behaviours are minimised. Staff develop effective intervention strategies to protect young people and prevent them from coming to harm.

Staff are trained to recognise suspected abuse and they know how to deal with allegations. Young people are protected through safe recruitment and staff who work with young people are selected carefully and they are vetted to assess their suitability to work with children. As a result, young people are protected from unsuitable people.

Young people who go missing are located and positive steps are taken to promote their safe return. Staff follow agreed protocols to co-ordinate a planned response to identify the whereabouts of young people if they are missing. There is evidence to show that the majority of missing from homes are unauthorised absences and these are reducing over time. There are no current issues with bullying. Staff protect young people from bullying both within the home and in the community.

Young people's positive behaviour is promoted through the use of targeted incentives and rewards. Sanctions and restraints are rarely used. The use of restraint is a last resort and is only ever used to protect young people from coming to harm. Staff are trained to manage young people's behaviours safely. They are trained in care and control and de-escalation strategies. Staff work well together as a team, providing young people with consistent support, clear and effective boundaries.

The home provides young people with a physically safe and secure environment. All health and safety checks are up to date and regular fire drills are held to show young people how to evacuate the premises safely. A range of risk assessments are in place and these are used to promote a safe living environment for young people.

Leadership and management

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

Young people benefit from a home that is managed efficiently. A permanent manager is employed to oversee the day-to-day operations of the home. There are suitable arrangements in place for senior staff to deputise in the Registered Manager's absence. The home meets the aims and objectives of its Statement of Purpose. It provides young people with good support and positive experiences to promote their positive progress.

There have been no concerns or complaints that have arisen since the last inspection. Since the last inspection the home has met the requirements and recommendations that were previously made. This has resulted in improvements to the standard of the physical environment, improved security and safe storage of medication. There is also an improved awareness of when to report significant events to Ofsted in accordance with the home's statutory responsibilities.

The home's Statement of purpose has been updated and restraints records are now recorded in correct numerical order. Young people who require pathway plans now have these to promote their planned transition to adulthood. As a result of these improvements, the home can demonstrate its capacity for continuing improvement based on its track record and performance since the last inspection.

The quality of young people's care is monitored effectively. The home can demonstrate the positive impact it has made to young people's lives and how their outcomes have improved overtime. Positive use is made of the home's monitoring activities to promote the smooth operations of the home. Regular quality assurance visits are undertaken to review the home's performance to promote the quality of

young people's care.

Young people benefit from a skilled, well-trained and qualified staff group. Staff benefit from good quality training to enable them to develop their knowledge and skills and keep up to date with professional practice. Young people's records provide them with an accurate account of their time within the home to enable them to reflect on their progress and understand their plans for the future.

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.