

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Pamela Nuckley
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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 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.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: a service that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

Good: a service that exceeds minimum requirements

Satisfactory: a service that only meets minimum requirements

Inadequate: a service that does not meet minimum requirements

Service information

Brief description of the service

The home, which is privately run, provides care and accommodation for one young person with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is judged to be **satisfactory**.

The home provides suitable and well planned care, which means that the outcomes for young people are satisfactory. Young people receive individual care and there is a strong commitment to helping young people access further education or career opportunities. Staff are committed to supporting and enabling young people to develop their skills and socially acceptable behaviour.

The stable, trained and well qualified staff team work hard to enable young people to gain life skills for their independence and so they can reach their full potential. As a result some young people have moved into independence successfully whilst others are just starting this journey. Young people are given opportunities to learn new skills and are encouraged to make informal choices for themselves.

Young people benefit from good relationships with staff and feel adults care about their welfare. Young people are able to access health services, community activities and have contact with people who are significant to them. Sufficient safeguarding practices are in place and young people say that they feel safe here.

Areas for the home's development include the need to make medication recordings clearer, to demonstrate that employment checks on staff have been verified and that views from young people, their families and other professionals have been ascertained. The home has yet to complete a development plan for their service and equality and diversity issues are not evidenced throughout the young people's records.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that there is a written record of all medication. Specifically in relation to

recordings of side effects, contra-indications of medications, any refusal of medication is noted and how medication is disposed of (NMS 6.15)

- ensure that the registered person has a written development plan, reviewed annually, for the future of the home, either identifying any planned changes in the operation or resources of the service, or confirming the continuation of the home's current operation and resource (NMS 15.2)
- ensure that the home has a record of the recruitment and vetting checks which have been carried out on those working at the home (NMS 16. 3 (a) (b) (c) (d) (e) (f) 16.4)
- consider ways to more effectively evidence how young people's views and those of their families and others significant to them are sought (NMS 1)
- ensure that children develop a positive self view, emotional resilience and knowledge and understanding of their background (NMS 2)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people are admitted to the home in a planned way. Young people say that they visited before hand and received a welcome booklet. Young people felt that they were fully included in this process. Although the young person had only been in placement for a few days, they said they felt safe, respected, listened to and happy.

Young people say that they have recently left school and that they have applied for apprenticeships and have appointments with career services. Young people feel that the staff support them very well in this area and discuss all options with them. Young people were observed in doing practical things such as ironing their own clothes and they said that life skills were discussed daily and implemented through their pathway plan.

Young people say that staff discuss healthy eating and the importance of exercise with them and they contribute to the planning of the menu, shopping and cooking of meals. The home is also supporting them by purchasing a gym card so they can exercise with friends. Young people are responsible for their own budgeting after a period of assessment of their skills. This system allows for young people to understand the importance of balancing monies in line with shopping wisely, allocating money for bills and for pleasure. This ensures that young people are being prepared for independence.

Young people say that they are able to contact their family and friends by telephone. They also see their parent on a weekly basis and feel that this is important to them. The home has detailed risk assessments and recording of all contacts and contact is in line with a young person's placement plan. Staff will also provide supervision of, transport to and practical advice or reassurance over any contact arrangements. This ensures the safety of young people and staff and that young people can keep in touch with people that are important to them.

Young people say that they have recently been able to purchase new bedroom furniture and that they could have redecorated their room if they had wished to. They say friends are welcome to visit and staff have discussed with them different activities and opportunities within the community. They were unsure as to whether they would be able to contribute to the home and its development as they were new but felt that they might be able to in the future. Staff confirmed with the young people that their views, wishes and feelings would be taken in to account on a range of things.

Young people say that the home has provided them with information on health services and that they have checked that all appointments are up to date. There is a good health plan document in place but due to the young person being new to the home this is yet to be fully completed. Staff say this will be completed with the young person as it is important to get their views on how they see their health.

Quality of care

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

The home is appropriately located, designed and maintained to a good standard. There are homely adornments throughout which give a warm atmosphere. Young people were observed being relaxed and comfortable within their surroundings. As a result young people say they feel that this is their home.

Young people say that their cultural and personal identity, ethnicity and faith are explored with them. However, the home does not evidence this within young people's documentation. Thus, this does not show that the home is caring for a young person holistically.

Staff support and encourage young people to engage in a wide range of activities, both educationally and for pleasure. This enables young people to benefit and experience different activities and promotes community awareness.

The home actively promotes young people in seeking further education, acquiring advice about career opportunities and in gaining work or work placements. For example, young people have applied for apprenticeships and are looking forward to undertaking these opportunities. This ensures that young people have the skills to further their careers.

The home prioritises a young person's health needs and they are registered with all necessary services to meet their needs promptly. There is good provision for storing medication and policies and procedures are in place if a young person wishes to self medicate. However, the recordings of medication are basic and they do not show if the medication has any side effects, contra-indications or whether the medication has been refused and how it is disposed of. Therefore a young person's health could be compromised.

Staff care for young people in line with their placement plan and the home has excellent pathway plans for young people. Young people say they are aware of their placement plan and are working on pathway plans with staff.

Young people say that they have been given all information in regards to how to raise a concern or make a complaint if they wish to. Staff are very clear on their roles and responsibilities in reporting, recording and supporting a young person if they wished to make a complaint. Staff and young people felt that all niggles were addressed and resolved amicably in the first instance. These systems ensure that young people are able to raise any concerns they might have.

Staff feel that the young people's views, wishes and feelings are at the centre of the care that they provide. Young people say that they are listened to and that their wishes and feelings are taken into account but that staff also discuss with them when things might not be possible to do or which might take longer to implement. Therefore, young people feel that they are fully consulted with in all areas.

The home has a no restraint policy due to lone working. However, there are robust policies and procedures in place to safeguard young people and staff. Relationships between staff and young people are good and are based on mutual respect for each

other. The home operates an incentive reward scheme for promoting good behaviour and sanctions are minimal and reflect the age and understanding of the young person.

Young people say that they received information within the welcome book on these areas but as they have only just come to the home, these things will be discussed in more length in a key working session which has already been set. This will ensure that young people understand the care provided by the home and the boundaries and expectations within the home.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people's care plans clearly identify any risks and protective factors and these have been incorporated into robust risk assessments, which give staff strategies and guidance on how to reduce risk factors. This ensures that staff and young people are safeguarded in daily practice, living and whilst out in the community.

Young people say they feel safe and supported by staff. Incidents of young people being missing from home has significantly reduced. This shows that young people have been supported by staff, that staff have addressed issues around being missing from home or young people have not felt the need to go missing from home due to the care, advice and support given. Young people felt confident that they would be responded to positively on their return. The home is currently working with the local Police on the new protocol for reporting young people 'missing from care'.

The home's recruitment and selection of staff is satisfactory. Staff records have all the documentation in place. However, not all staff files clearly show that references and employment history have been verified, state whether a Criminal Record Board check (CRB) is clear or not, some qualification certificates need to be on file and training undertaken needs to be up dated. This does not ensure that young people are safeguarded.

The home has clear policies and procedures in place to safeguard young people. Any investigations or suspicions of harm are dealt with without delay, fairly and consistently in a way that supports both the person making the allegation and the person subject of the allegation. Staff were clear in their roles, duties and responsibilities in reporting and recording such matters and stated that a young person would be supported fully. All visitors to the home are recorded on entering and leaving the home and identity badges are requested. This ensures that young people are protected from abuse.

Young people's privacy is respected and information is handled in a confidential manner. Young people's records are stored correctly to protect their confidentiality and staff understand the importance of confidentiality.

Young people live in a home that provides physical safety and security. There are no health and safety issues that would compromise welfare within the home and all fire, insurance and utilities services are up to date. This ensures that young people are safe within their environment.

Leadership and management

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

The home is managed and organised well to keep young people safe and secure. The provider meets all of the aims and objectives within their Statement of Purpose, which is clear and accessible. Young people are guided through and know what to expect from the service and the care they will receive.

There are various systems in place to monitor the care given and the operations of the home. The home completes regular Regulation 33 visits to help evaluate the service and the manager carries out Regulation 34 monitoring monthly but the home has yet to implement a development plan. Although this does not directly impact on young people, this does not ensure that the home is evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the home to ensure improved outcomes for young people or projecting future developments for the home.

Young people enjoy the stability of a staff team who are sufficient in number to care for young people and there have been no new appointments for several years. Staff are well supported through supervision and staff meetings. Staff complete all mandatory training which is refreshed frequently and the staff are able to access other specialised training to meet a young person's needs. The company shows a commitment to staff in gaining a professional qualification and all staff at the home have their National Vocational qualification at level 3 in care. This ensures that young people are cared for by competent and well trained staff.

Young people's records are well structured and are held securely. As a consequence young people feel that their information is held confidentially. There have been no notifications since the last inspection. However, staff and management are well aware of the process and requirements to report significant events.

A young person's social worker confirmed that they had received a copy of the home's Statement of Purpose. They felt that the home had been very good throughout the induction process of the young person and that they were kept informed of all developments.

At the last inspection one requirement and four recommendations were set. The home now evidences that fire drills take place regularly, the home's Statement of Purpose is up to date and training undertaken by staff is accurate, risks assessments are robust and pathway plans are comprehensive. As a result young people are receiving care in line with their placement plan. However, the home has not been able to effectively evidence how the young people's views are sought or whether any consultation or feedback is sought from them, their family or other professionals involved in their care. The manager states this is due to the home being closed for a period of time and a young person only being placed very recently. Therefore this will remain as a recommendation.

Equality and diversity practice is **satisfactory**.