

## Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC023636        |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 18/09/2013      |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Janet Hunnam    |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Full            |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home |

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| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 18/03/2013 |
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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for 10 children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is operated by a charitable 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 **outstanding**.

Children thrive in a safe, nurturing environment where they receive outstanding levels of care, support and guidance from a highly skilled and committed staff team. Exceptional levels of individualised, consistent, therapeutic care enable children to make significant progress in their personal development enhancing their future life chances.

Listening to children and valuing their views and opinions allows them to build positive, trusting relationships with staff and their peers with subsequent improvements in their confidence and self-esteem. Detailed care planning processes ensure children receive extremely individualistic and personalised care to meet their needs. Children are positive about their experiences living at the home. They recognise and appreciate that staff are always thinking about them. Children's well-being is at the centre of all staff's practice in promoting positive outcomes and protecting children. Sensitive and supportive relationships between children and staff underpin a culture of safety. Children feel safe, well cared for and know that adults at the home will protect them from harm.

The Registered Manager strives to continually maintain and improve high standards of care through rigorous monitoring systems, outstanding levels of support for staff and developing new initiatives. Children who have been psychologically traumatised by past experiences benefit considerably from their placement at the home.

One minor shortfall relates to the length of time new staff are taking to complete the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction programme. However, this has

little impact on the welfare of children . Overall the home provides excellent care with the needs of children continually at the forefront of practice and development.

## 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 new staff undertake the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction standards, commencing within 7 working days of starting their employment and being completed within 6 months. (NMS 18.3)

### Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **outstanding**.

Children are making excellent progress notably from their starting points at the time of admission as a result of an outstanding level of care. Highly individualised therapeutic support helps them grow in confidence, thrive and relate to others. Consequently, outcomes in all aspects of their lives improve. Children are happy at the home and they recognise they are important to staff who are always thinking about them.

Close monitoring, robust health care plans and thorough attention by staff to each child's health needs ensure they meet all their health requirements. Integrated throughout a child's experience at the home is a therapeutic approach to meet their specific emotional and psychological needs. All children receive individual psychotherapy and on-going support from highly skilled and competent staff resulting in meaningful personal growth and improvements in their emotional and psychological well-being.

Children attend the school on site and have excellent attendance. They are making significant progress in relation to their starting points on admission to the school and in the context of their previous education history. The value of education is embedded in the culture of the home and the school operates within the therapeutic community which has a positive impact on the children's capacity to learn. Children's education progress is promoted and valued. Education and care staff work together to ensure all staff have full information to meet the needs of individual children. Children pursue their particular interests within the home and the local community accessing a wide range of activities to develop their social experiences and integration into the wider community. Staff facilitate and support contact with the child's family enabling children to maintain and improve family relationships safely and with confidence.

### Quality of care

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

The staff team delivers exceptionally high quality care. Excellent channels of communication enable staff to share information regarding children. This ensures their individual and changing needs are known by all staff who are consistent in their approach. Detailed day-to-day planning, with the needs of the child at the centre of staff practice, provides children with stability and a sense of security.

Listening to children and valuing their views is inherent in the ethos of the home and in staff's therapeutic approach to caring for children at the home. Children are aware that staff are constantly thinking about them. They develop strong, positive relationships with staff and flourish in a nurturing, homely environment. Staff are sensitive and empathetic to children's needs and foster respect for all members of the community. A child commented 'staff and the other children look after me'. These therapeutic relationships enable children to develop confidence and trust in the adults who care for them knowing their views are valued. Children are positive about their relationships with their key workers who act as their advocate and ensure the home responds to a child's requests and opinions. Formal complaints by children are rare due to the on-going consultation with children and the receptiveness and approachability of staff. A child commented 'I can always talk to staff'. Senior managers meet the children in groups on a weekly basis when children can raise and discuss current issues that are important to them. Consequently, children develop a belief that their views are important and they can contribute to decisions that affect them.

The care planning process is detailed, comprehensive and gives an exceptional account of the child's individual needs and the support they require to progress in all aspects of their lives. Care plans, written from the child's perspective, clearly identify each child's support needs in relation to their specific vulnerabilities with distinct strategies to help them through their difficulties. Staff regularly review plans with children, allowing them to recognise their progress and continue to work towards their goals. As a result, children receive extremely individualistic and personalised care to meet their needs.

Children live in an environment that actively supports their physical and psychological well-being. They enjoy healthy, nutritious meals. A child commented that staff 'feed you properly, the food is very good – awesome'. Another made a specific comment on how much he enjoyed the vegetables. Children enjoy regular exercise in the home's spacious grounds riding their bikes, playing football and generally having fun with each other and staff outside. Consequently, children enjoy a healthy lifestyle. Staff receive training in key areas relating to the health of children. Robust managing and monitoring arrangements are in place for the administration and audit of medication to ensure the safety and welfare of children.

The home is comfortable, spacious and well maintained. Children appreciate the space and the large garden is highly valued. Furnishings and décor are of high quality. Children personalise their bedrooms, giving them a sense of identity and belonging. The welcoming, homely environment provides a relaxing and nurturing

environment for children to grow and develop.

### **Safeguarding children and young people**

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

The ethos of the home is founded on a clinical, therapeutic model, providing a safe environment designed for group living and learning where safeguarding, protecting the children and promoting their welfare is central to practice. Children feel safe, secure and well cared for. Structure and boundaries enable children to feel safe at the home with strong, positive relationships between children and staff underpinning their safety. High staff ratios, detailed and comprehensive risk assessments and individualised care planning protect children from harm.

Staff regularly review thorough behaviour management plans and risk assessments to address children's varying needs. These demonstrate an excellent identification of children's specific difficulties and vulnerabilities. Staff receive in-depth training to work effectively within the home's therapeutic model. They respond to negative behaviour consistently and with understanding fostering relationships to benefit the child. Staff are exceedingly attentive in recognising signs of potentially unsafe behaviour and adept at using approaches to minimise risk and protect children and staff. Incidents of physical intervention are uncommon. Staff training enables them to intervene safely when necessary to support the child in regaining self-control. The child's view of such incidents is an integral part of recording and reflecting on such incidents.

Staff are vigilant to any signs of bullying and deal with it promptly and effectively. Children do not leave the home without permission but robust policies and procedures are in place to take appropriate action if necessary. Staff use sanctions rarely and within a restorative approach to promote positive relationships that underpin the home's approach to behaviour management.

Excellent health and safety measures protect children and staff from the risk of harm. All checks are up to date, appropriate fire safety measures are in place and risk assessments identify potential hazards and risk-reduction measures. The home follows robust recruitment procedures that protect children from the employment of unsuitable people.

### **Leadership and management**

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

The Registered Manager of the home is highly effective. His knowledge, skills and experience, and that of senior members of staff, provide excellent leadership. The staff team are committed to providing high quality therapeutic care enabling children to make healthy attachments, relate to others and improve their future life chances. Senior managers are continuously seeking to improve provision at the home and

have a development plan in place to introduce new initiatives. Developments since the last inspection include improvements to the environment. Children have been involved in setting up a new community room and discussing its use. Two requirements made at the previous inspection have been met. Recording of sanctions now include an evaluation of the effectiveness of the measure and the home has sent Regulation 34 reports to Ofsted. Rigorous and robust monitoring systems are in place to effectively maintain the provision of high quality care and support positive outcomes for children.

Clear information is available in the Statement of Purpose explaining the ethos and philosophy of the home and details of the provision. A child's move to the home is planned well in advance taking full account of the needs of the child. A social worker commented that 'there had been a long transition process which had been very successful due to excellent communication, with the child being listened to throughout. The home also gives careful thought and planning to children leaving the home.

Training and support for staff is a high priority. New staff receive intensive support from senior managers on an individual and group basis. New staff undertake the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction programme alongside the organisation's thorough introduction to their clinical model. However, new staff have not completed this programme within six months. All staff participate in several group meetings each week and receive individual supervision to ensure they have a thorough understanding of the children and opportunities to reflect. A consultant child and adolescent psychotherapist provides support for the programme of supervision. Staff value the support they receive and the high levels of training which ensures they can skilfully and effectively facilitate the progress of children.

## 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.