

## Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC023737        |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 24/08/2011      |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Mark Blesky     |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Full            |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home |

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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

This private children's home can accommodate up to three young people, aged between 12 and under 18 years. The home offers residential care and support for young people that have suffered disruption in their lives.

### Overall effectiveness

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

This is a well-managed home where staff feel supported and motivated by the manager. All staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and this, in turn, allows them to be confident and supportive to the young people. Training and formal supervision provides staff with both guidance and personal development, to fulfil their caring role.

Young people's needs are appropriately assessed and provide for and each young person benefits from highly individualised and tailored care. Young people have benefited greatly from this well organised and sustained planning for their care. It is noted that outcomes have been exceeded in key areas of their care. Equality and diversity is valued in this home and all young people benefit from individualised care tailored to their very specific and diverse needs.

### Areas for improvementStatutory 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   |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 17B<br>(2001) | 17b ensure a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose which must include: 3(h) confirmation that the person authorised by the registered provider to make the record has spoken to the child concerned and the person using the measure about the use of the measure; 4(b) details of any methods used to avoid the need to use that measure.<br>(Regulation 17b) | 30/09/2011 |

## Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home's procedures are compatible with and have regard to Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) protocols and procedures. (NMS 5.6)
- ensure that the home implements a proportionate approach to any risk assessment. (NMS 4.5)

## Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people have made exceptional progress in this home in a number of significant areas. Social workers state that young people's lives have been turned around by caring and supportive staff. Staff clearly understand the young people's needs and young people have benefited immensely.

Young people have developed skills in self-care and managing risk and this has resulted in the young people taken increasing responsibility for themselves. Young people have a clear awareness of healthy lifestyles and understand that lifestyle choices can have a significant effect on their general health. Young people attend all routine appointments and understand the importance of healthy eating. Young people plan, prepare and cook meals both in their day-to-day activities and also as a means of developing adult living skills.

Young people have been empowered through positive and rewarding relationships with staff and understanding their responsibilities and the expectations of their behaviour. Young people demonstrate maturity and self-confidence and this is evident in their relationships with staff and one another.

Young people have achieved and maintained attendance at school and this is an area of substantial improvement. Progress is clear and consistent in both behaviour and learning. Progress and achievements have exceeded previous expectations and young people say that they enjoy school and feel proud of their progress there. Staff have provided excellent support in this area and liaison between the home and the school has supported these learning opportunities.

Social workers described the progress that the young people had made as significant and exceptional, exceeding their expectations. This home has made outstanding progress with these young people.

Contact with friends and family is well planned so that young people can enjoy this

time and gain the most benefit from this activity. Staff have clearly worked extremely hard to support contact and prepare young people for demands that some of these relationships may present. Work has been very successful in this area and young people have demonstrated resilience in times of stress at contact, which may have previously disrupted the relationship.

All young people have independency plans to ensure young people have the opportunities for a successful transition to independence and adult life.

Plans demonstrate the individual and diverse needs and skills of each young person, providing a highly individualised and personal plan. Young people say that these plans help them to become independent and provide them with the confidence to help themselves in later life. Plans are well managed and young people are fully integrated into this process. It is clear that staff have worked very hard in this area and young people say that staff have managed to motivate them in areas in which they have been less interested.

Resulting plans have provided young people with not only the necessary practical skills but also increased levels of confidence along with greater opportunities to succeed in later life. Planning is well managed, effective and insightful.

## **Quality of care**

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

Young people say that staff are always there for them and take good care of them. Young people are reassured by staff that demonstrate care and consideration for them in their day-to-day relationships.

Young people are respected by staff and feel valued and empowered. Young people are respectful of the needs of their peers and relationships between the young people are supportive and harmonious. Young people say that they enjoy good relationships with the staff and they understand the importance of mutual respect for one another.

Young people are confident to express their individual and collective views and feel that staff value and consider their views appropriately. Formal opportunities for this are provided for all young people, through key working sessions and children's meetings. Views and comments are considered and acted upon and the home's staff integrate the young people's views into decisions affecting the operation of the home. Staff will also discuss with the young people times when their wishes cannot be acted upon. Young people say that that this is important as it helps them understand that their opinions are valued, even when they are not acted upon. Staff say that this discussion helps young people gain increasing awareness of how they can influence their environment and helps them to develop the confidence to express their views.

Formal complaints procedures are in place and these are well managed,

comprehensively recorded and maintained. This enables young people to feel that their complaints are listened to and acted upon. Young people expressed strong motivation in this area and are very aware of their rights to complain and to expect action to address any dissatisfaction.

Day-to-day complaints are typically resolved at the time and this reflects the warm, trusting and supportive relationships between staff and the young people. Young people say that they rarely complain because they have little need to; however, they all understood the formal procedures and expressed confidence in this process.

Young people are well supported by detailed, care and placement plans. These are well written, highly individualised and address the diverse needs of the young people. These are regularly reviewed and all recommendations are acted upon by the staff. In addition, the home provides 24 hour management plans which further breakdown the broader needs, into day-to-day needs. Plans are very detailed and address types of behaviour, methods of engaging with young people and how different types of motivation can support them.

The home is very well kept and maintained and staff work hard to provide a homely and pleasant environment for the young people. Young people say that the premises look like an ordinary home and it makes them feel like any other young person living at home.

Young people's day-to-day health needs are well planned for and all young people are registered with the core health services to maintain their general health. Plans for specific interventions or more specialised care is well managed and ensure that young people are kept healthy and well. Young people benefit from services that engage them into taking responsibility for their health care. The home employs a health advisor and qualified nurse who provide both the staff and the young people with advice and support. In this way young people say they can make informed lifestyle choices and decisions.

Good links are made and maintained between the home and the schools and this has resulted in the young people maintaining attendance and achieving educational goals. Young people have made an impressive level of progress and achieved both levels of attendance and academic outcomes exceeding expectations.

Young people are encouraged to find community activities, hobbies or interests outside of the home to help them become integrated into the wider community. Group structured activities are also provided to encourage a range of interesting and healthy pursuits. This has provided young people the opportunities to experience new pursuits and activities and gain confidence to partake in events outside of the home.

## **Safeguarding children and young people**

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

Young people feel safe in this home and say that the staff take great care of them and care greatly about their welfare. Staff have taken action to support and protect young people and this has at times presented conflict. Young people say that they know that when they first came to the home they took risks and acted in a manner that placed them at risk of harm.

Staff have provided effective care and control and taken both necessary and appropriate action to keep the young people safe. This process has been very effective. As the staff have supported and educated the young people, young people have in turn understood how their behaviour has placed them in danger. This is a very significant and important development as it has both empowered the young people to take responsibility for themselves and provided them with insights and respect for themselves. Young people, therefore, manage and adapt their own behaviour and it was noted that systems of control are not so much punitive, but largely educational and promoting self-control and taking responsibility.

Formal sanctions and other appropriate methods of control are in place, but are rarely used. Physical intervention procedures are in place, but also rarely used. In the event of a physical intervention staff use their formal training and experience effectively to minimise harm and distress for the young people. It is noted that physical intervention recording is detailed and comprehensive in incident records. However, the volume used for recording in accordance with the regulations does not currently contain all information required.

Behaviour management within the home is outstanding and staff are clearly aware that not only are they expected to keep the young people safe while they are resident, but their responsibilities stretch to providing young people skills of self-care for the future.

Young people say that staff support them to respect themselves and examples were noted where staff relationships were very effective and beneficial to this concept. Social workers expressed high regard for this home and stated that the home had successfully and consistently managed previous risk-taking behaviour.

To protect young people from bullying and persecution the home manages a robust and effective anti-bullying procedure. All staff undertake training in this important area to alert them to behaviours and situations where bullying can arise. Young people say that there is no bullying in the home and staff will talk to them and explain when their behaviour becomes intimidating or oppressive. Discussions of this nature are integrated and part of daily living and not just related to anti-bullying strategies.

Young people rarely go missing or make themselves absent from the home. Significant progress has been made in this area to address previous concerns for this behaviour. Young people do not typically go missing and they say that this is

because they can talk out their problems with the staff. This has resulted in young people gaining increasing levels of responsibility and promoted trust from staff.

This is an area that has developed as young people have gained awareness of their own behaviour and how to manage responsibility. Young people have benefited significantly and young people that may have presented unsafe behaviour in the community previously now present responsibility and a sense of maturity.

The home has clear and formal searching, reporting and recovery procedures in place if young people were to go missing or become absent from the home. These are understood by all staff and effective in minimising risks to the young people. All young people understand the missing person's procedures and these have been agreed with the local police. The home has not yet integrated the 'Runaway and Missing from Home and Care' (RMFHC) protocols, although this was being implemented at the time of the inspection.

The young people are protected and safeguarded by robust safeguarding procedures within the home. Staff are supported by out of hours and on call services where advice or extra staff can be deployed in more urgent situations. The safeguarding co-ordinator has many years of experience and this provides both staff and the young people with safe care practices and prompt action to address any concerns.

Risk assessment is maintained for both the property and the young people. Young people are kept safe in the home by well managed and effective health and safety and fire safety procedures. Regular assessment of the home is made and fire evacuation drills take place at suitable intervals. All risk assessment is based on placement plans and care plans and all recommendations from statutory reviews are considered in risk assessment reviews. Each young person also has a 24 hour management plan and these provide even greater levels of individual care for the young people. These plans detail the diverse and particular personalities of the young people from how staff wake them up in the morning to how they are supported to retire at night-time. These are very detailed and well managed documents that demonstrate the importance and the respect the home places on individuality. It is clear from resulting and developing behaviour that risk assessment has been both successful in managing the immediate risk, but has also promoted young people's understanding of risk.

It was noted that the previous risk assessments, whilst necessary earlier in the placement, were in some cases less relevant now. It was considered that too many risk assessment areas could run the risk of diluting focus on the more relevant and current concerns.

To ensure that only suitable and appropriate staff are in the home, all staff undertake rigorous checks before they are employed. All statutory checks and reference checks are completed before the staff members work with the young people. All visitors to the home are supervised and no visitor is permitted to have unsupervised access to the young people or the home. Young people feel safe in the knowledge that staff value and protect their welfare.

## Leadership and management

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

The home is well managed by a strong and supportive manager. Staff and the young people benefit from consistent and effective management of the home and of the services provided. There are adequate and experienced staff in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of the young people. The home is financially sound and is well furnished, maintained and providing services to the young people effectively.

This home has consistently provided and sustained good and outstanding levels of care and demonstrated improvements in performance. Regulation 34 monitoring is effective and the manager uses this process, both as an assessment and improvement tool as well as a quality assurance document.

Development areas are identified and addressed and a formal development plan is in place. The Statement of Purpose is regularly reviewed and services to the young people are adapted and developed to meet assessed and emerging needs. The aims and objectives in the Statement of Purpose are met effectively.

Regulation 33 inspection visits are undertaken and actions are taken to address any identified shortfall in service. Regulation 33 reports far exceed the national minimum standards and this process has been effectively adapted to comprehensively review the home and the manager in which it provides care for the young people.

Staff and the manager are supportive of the inspection process and take action to address or exceed recommendation and actions set from inspections. All staff receive regular and good quality supervision tailored to support their professional development and ability to meet the needs of the young people.

Supervision is reflective and supports openness and honesty between the supervisor and supervisee. Staff are aware of their responsibilities and the expectations of their roles. Young people benefit from confident and focussed staff support and the staff feel empowered in their role to care for the young people.

Well-managed training takes place to ensure that staff are competent and effective in their care of the young people. All staff who have individual training profiles and six-monthly performance evaluation. Training is valued and well attended by staff and all staff receive mandatory training as well as more specific training to meet their own development or identified needs of the young people.

Records are managed appropriately and provide clear pictures of the lives of the young people and the services that have been provided for them. Detailed and comprehensive records are kept safely and securely and these are available for the young people to read and help them gain a sense of their time in the home. Any significant event in the home is reported to the appropriate authority. All reports and

notifications of this nature are clear, comprehensive and made in a timely manner.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.