

## Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC025940            |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 04/06/2013          |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Sandra Jacobs-Walls |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Full                |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home     |

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| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 28/01/2013 |
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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

This home is one of a small number of residential services run by a voluntary organisation. The purpose of the home is to provide long-term care and support for a maximum of four children or young people with severe learning and/ or physical disabilities.

### 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**.

Overall the service performs well in meeting the identified needs of young people. Staff provide individualised care and are keen for young people to meet their full potential. The quality of the relationship between staff and young people is good and staff are very skilled and experienced in working effectively with young people living with disabilities. Young people live healthy lifestyles and have access to excellent recreational opportunities. Young people's general and social development is well promoted by the service and their transition to adult services is well managed by the staff group.

Young people are kept safe and staff demonstrate a commitment to improving the home's service provision. The home has resolved the one recommendation for improvement made at the last inspection.

However, some shortfalls are noted with regard to the qualifications that staff hold; the formal supervision of night staff and the maintenance of supervision records; failure to forward Regulation 34 monitoring reports to Ofsted as required; the recording of any incident of restraint and evacuation fire drills.

## Areas for improvement

## Statutory 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   |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 27<br>(2001) | ensure that all person's employed receive appropriate training, in particular NVQ training at level 3 (Regulation 27 (4)(a)) | 30/09/2013 |
| 27<br>(2001) | ensure that all persons employed, in particular, night staff receive appropriate supervision (Regulation 27(4)(a))           | 30/08/2013 |
| 34<br>(2001) | supply to HMCI a report in respect of any review conducted under regulation 34 (Regulation 34(2))                            | 30/08/2013 |

## Recommendations

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

- ensure a written record is kept by the home detailing the time and date and length of each supervision held for each member of staff. The record is signed by the supervisor and the member of staff at the end of the supervision (NMS 19.5)
- ensure staff understand the nature of records to be maintained by the home. In particular records detailing any use of restraint. (NMS 22.1)
- ensure there is an emergency evacuation plan that all staff and young people are familiar with and have practiced at differing times of the day, in particular, during the morning. (NMS 10.9)

## Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Outcomes for young people are positive. They enjoy living in a stable, secure and caring environment with a staff group who understand their individual needs and the impact of their disability well. Young people make significant individual growth while in placement. They receive personalised care and their identity needs are well met. For example, young people regularly attend their chosen place of worship and eat meals that meet their religious obligations.

Young people live healthy lifestyles. They are promptly registered with primary care services after they move in and have access to relevant specialist health services, such as, occupational therapy, and physiotherapy which further promote healthy lifestyles. They enjoy varied, well-balanced and nutritious meals that meet their cultural and religious needs. The home's provision of food is good and ensures young people receive appropriate support in order to eat meals safely. For example, some

young people have their meals pureed or finely cut to prevent choking.

Young people's learning is promoted by the service. They make good use a wide range of sensory equipment; which supports their general development. Young people also benefit from effective communication between the staff of the home and school personnel; this ensures target setting is consistent. This is particularly the case for enhancing some young people's mobility and communication skills. Young people develop skills that promote their independence, in particular, their self-care skills. Young people's developmental targets are set in accordance with their known ability and individual support plans.

Young people are able to participate in a range of recreational activities that often promote physical exercise and sensory stimulation. Young people make very good use of the home's sensory building which is creatively located in the home's garden. Young people also enjoy creative recreational activities away from the home. These include their participation in local cultural and festival events, trips to theme parks, swimming and summer holidays away.

Young people have the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the home and the local community. For example, individual rooms are decorated in accordance with known preferences such as favourite stuffed toys, posters and photographs. Young people participate in decision-making with regards to holidays and daily activities. They also have good presence in the local community; they regularly participate in local events, shopping trips and attend local places of interest.

Young people benefit from the home's flexible approach toward visitation at the home and enjoy regular contact with friends and family members. Staff frequently consult and liaise with parents. This communication is effective and contributes to the success of placements at the home.

The majority of young people living at the home are over the age of 18 years or nearing their 18th birthday. They work on achieving targets such as vocabulary development to enhance their independence in preparation to moving on.

## Quality of care

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

Staff and management demonstrate a keen commitment to ensuring young people have very positive outcomes while in their care. The quality of care at the home is excellent. Young people share a positive relationship with the staff group and staff members indicate that they enjoy helping young people meet their full potential. One staff member comments, 'I love working with young people. We really do care about them and we advocate very hard that they are in the correct placement when they leave here.' Most young people achieve significant personal growth during their time in placement. This is demonstrated in the reduction of challenging behaviour and improvements in their communication and mobility.

Young people receive individual care that meet their needs as outlined in their placement and care plans. The documentation of key information is comprehensive and good efforts are made to retrieve relevant information from the placing authority. This ensures that parents, staff and the local authority are in agreement with the purpose of the placement and how identified needs are to be met.

Staff have a good understanding of the individual identity needs of young people and they demonstrate a commitment to ensure these are well met. So, for example, staff are mindful of the impact of young people's disability, gender, ethnic and religious and learning needs of each young person. Some young people attend the local Sikh temple, listen to audio tapes of prayers and participate in local cultural events. Young girls regularly enjoy manicures and pedicures. The home's premises have been decorated to display positive images of multi-cultural life and some individual rooms have on display pictures of religious leaders.

The staff group are experienced and skilled in working with young people living with multiple disabilities. Staff are patient and caring in their approach and engage well with them. Many young people are unable to communicate through speech and make use of alternative modes of communication. Staff make good, creative attempts to engage with young people to ensure their feelings are understood.

Staff are able to accurately interpret young people's expressions, gestures and moods that indicate how they are feeling or what they require at any given time. Key information, such as the home's complaints procedure is appropriately available in symbolic cues. Since the last inspection, no complaints have been made against the home.

Young people live very healthy lifestyles and their case files contain comprehensive information from specialist health services. Staff have access to clear medical information and receive specific medical training, such as, the management of epileptic seizures. The staff group receive training in first aid, medication management and food hygiene, which helps promote young people's healthy lifestyles. Staff's administration of young people's medication is consistently safe and supported by accurate records. There are clear systems in place to record accidents that occur in the home and any subsequent action taken. The home's provision of food is good and young people enjoy varied, well-balanced and nutritious meals that meet their individual needs. Staff are very aware of the eating and feeding regimes of young people and they ensure that young people receive safe and appropriate assistance at meal times.

Staff work in collaboration with school teaching staff to ensure the care they offer is appropriate and consistent with young people's development targets at school. There is excellent, daily communication between staff of the home and school teaching staff that support this successful partnership. Staff attend individual educational planning meetings, which detail progress and development issues. The home is well equipped to support young people's learning and has a good array of learning and play equipment which supports young people social and general development.

Staff promote young people's independence which enhances their life skills and experiences. Staff encourage young people's independence in line with their level of understanding and ability. Staff monitor and support young people's self-care skills, and offer opportunities to participate in everyday life such as shopping. Older young people in particular, benefit from this practice as it assists their transition to adult support services.

The home is appropriately located, designed and maintained. The premises are suitably adapted to cater for the needs of young people and is equipped with overhead hoists, adapted beds, shower rooms and baths. The premises are wheelchair accessible.

### **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, harm and abuse. They share a trusting relationship with staff; which contributes to their feelings of safety and security. Young people have access to appropriate information about the home's complaints procedures and independent bodies available to advocate on their behalf. Some young people have been assigned their own advocate and the home's Regulation 33 visitor, who monitors the conduct of the home, is well known to them. Bullying does not occur in the home.

Staff have access to comprehensive child protection policies and procedures. They receive formal safeguarding training and child protection issues are regularly discussed at team meetings. The staff group have access to information relating to the protection of young people living with disabilities. Staff demonstrate good knowledge of the home's procedures with regards to allegations and are clear about action to take in the event of an allegation being made. This is important to ensure staff offer a consistent response to any allegation. Since the last inspection no allegations have been made.

The home has good protocols in place to address young people who are absent from the home without permission or are missing. Since the last inspection there has been one incident of a young person going missing from the home, which was managed appropriately. The home has detailed records of this incident.

Staff encourage young people's positive behaviour and generally young people are very well behaved. The home has clear behaviour management policies and procedures in place to support practice. Each young person has a detailed risk assessment and behavioural management plan in place to alert staff to potential triggers. These plans offer staff strategies to combat unacceptable or challenging behaviour. Staff are mindful of the impact young people's disabilities have on their behavioural patterns and are skilled in managing difficult behaviour. Staff routinely employ verbal praise to encourage positive behaviour, and sparingly make use of sanctions to address undesired behaviour.

Staff receive training in physical intervention, but the use of such techniques are extremely rare in the home. The service has clear systems in place to monitor any use of physical intervention. However, staff do not have clear information about the appropriate recording of such incidents as outlined by the Regulations.

The organisation has sound policies and procedures in place with regards to the safe vetting and selection of staff. This ensures that only people assessed as suitable are employed to care for young people.

The home's premises are appropriately secure and young people are comfortable in their surroundings. The home's communal and private bedrooms are adequately furnished and decorated. The premises are suitable for the needs of young people living with disability and are safe. Staff complete key maintenance checks, such as, the regular servicing of adapted equipment. They conduct regular fire drills, but none have been conducted in the early morning to ensure staff have experience of safely evacuating the building at this time of day; when occupants may be less alert than usual.

## **Leadership and management**

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

The home is generally well run. The Registered Manager has extensive experience of caring for children and young people and is appropriately qualified. The Registered Manager demonstrates a genuine commitment to improving the home's service provision despite proposed changes to the structure and operation of the home in the near future. The service has in place a development plan that outlines proposals of a merger with another children's home, also owned and run by the organisation.

Stakeholders have access to clear information about services offered by the home. The home's Statement of Purpose outlines well the aims and objectives of the service and is fully compliant with the Regulations. The home's children's guide is an informative, creative summary of services provided by the home and is available to young people in formats they are familiar with.

The service employs a sufficient number of staff to ensure the needs of young people are met. Additional staff are available to work in the home to increase the level of supervision required, when necessary and these arrangements keep young people safe. The core staff group are experienced, some having worked in the home for several years. The staff team is diverse in terms of ethnicity and gender and staff have good experience of working with young people from a range of differing cultures, with varying complex needs.

Staff have access to adequate training opportunities. The vast majority of the staff group are appropriately qualified; however, some staff members do not yet hold the necessary formal child-care qualifications as specified in the national minimum standards for children's homes. Young people benefit from a skilled staff group whose practices are in line with current government legislation.



Staff feel well supported. Managers ensure that staff appraisals are completed annually; however the frequency of formal staff supervision for night staff, in particular, is not consistent. The performances of these staff are therefore not regularly monitored to maintain the home's high quality of care. Managers' records of supervision sessions are not appropriately documented or signed by both supervisor and supervisee to demonstrate agreed action relating to staff performances.

The home has adequate mechanisms in place to monitor the conduct of the home and quality of care provided. The Registered Manager regularly monitors the quality of care in line with Regulation 34. However these monitoring reports are not consistently forwarded to Ofsted as required. Designated personnel from the organisation conducts monthly, unannounced visits to monitor the conduct of the home in line with Regulation 33. Monitoring reports produced in relation to these visits are sufficiently detailed and include a written response from the Registered Manager. The home's monitoring systems assist with service development and improvement.

## 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.