

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Seka Graovac
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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 children's home is privately owned. It is a family business with a majority of family members employed within it. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children and young people.

Overall effectiveness

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

The management and staff are highly committed to improving the outcomes for young people in line with their comprehensive care plans. The home provides highly individualised support that is underpinned effectively by good partnership working. The management and staff are able to build appropriately warm and trusting relationships with young people in their care. This contributes effectively to young people's increased engagement with education and other services. The management and staff consistently follow clear safeguarding strategies to ensure safeguarding and protection of young people. Young people and their parents judge this service as good.

Young people live in the home that is efficiently managed in line with the current legislation. No breaches of regulations have been identified at this inspection. This report makes two recommendations relating to staff qualifications and supervision for the manager.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure all care staff have attained a minimum level 3 qualification in caring for children and young people (NMS 18.5)
- make suitable arrangements for professional supervision of the registered manager. (NMS 19.3)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Staff and other professionals support and guide young people carefully to begin to

understand their background and the current situation through the use of life-story work. Young people make satisfactory progress to develop a positive self view and confidence in relation to their starting points.

Young people enjoy a healthy diet that includes having organic fruit for breakfast. Staff appropriately motivate them to engage in exercise, such as going together to dance classes. Young people have easy access to health professionals when they need it.

Young people have good opportunities to learn about constructive relationships. They benefit from having regular contact with their families. They are appropriately supported to improve their presentation and self-image. For example, they have their hair and nails professionally done and are supported to choose fashionable spectacles.

Young people have a wide range of opportunities to enjoy various activities, to achieve and increase their life chances. They go to school every day and receive good support to work towards gaining educational achievements.

Quality of care

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

Young people live in a place that is appropriately maintained and decorated to a high standard. The home provides a healthy environment where young people's health is promoted effectively. Staff proactively motivate young people to attend their schools, work towards gaining educational achievements and plan for their future. Young people have good opportunities to enjoy a range of leisure activities and develop their social skills. Young people enjoy having positive and appropriately warm relationships with staff and management of the home.

Young people have good opportunities to contribute to their care plans. They receive highly personalised support that is in line with their comprehensive care plans and decisions made at the professionals' meetings. A social worker said that working with this home was 'an example of good working together'. Young people have good opportunities to express their views and feelings at the regular key-working sessions and residents' meetings. Staff provide them with the relevant information and give them choices. Staff proactively help young people to understand the reasons behind not always being able to follow all their wishes. Young people are always taken seriously. Young people know how to make a complaint. The management and staff follow an effective complaints procedure to successfully foster the empowerment of young people and to improve the quality of the service.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Staff receive regular training in child protection and have easy access to the home's clear guidance relating to safeguarding children. The management and staff have a good understanding of safe working practice and child protection reporting procedures. They know how to meet individual young people's needs and promote their welfare.

A comprehensive risk assessment is completed and kept up to date for each young person. The risk assessment includes clear safeguarding strategies. The management and staff work in close partnership with the Local Safeguarding Children Board, children's social care services, police, school and other services to increase protection and safeguarding of young people who are under identified as at high risk of harm. Young people report feeling safe while at the home. They have good opportunities to discuss any concerns they might have and adopt safer behaviours. However, despite the best efforts made by the management and staff to protect young people effectively, the outcomes for young people in this respect are only satisfactory. Although it happens less frequently, some young people continue to engage in highly risky behaviours.

The home has a proactive and positive approach to behaviour management. Staff consistently promote and reward young people's constructive behaviour in line with their individual targets. Physical interventions have not been used and sanctions consist of withholding rewards.

Regular health and safety checks ensure that young people live in a physically safe environment. The house and the arrangements in place provide the appropriate level of security to young people, while at the same time enabling them to enjoy privacy and liberty of movement. Young people are aware of the home's clear general rules and any individual arrangements that are in place to protect them. When a young person is missing, the home works in close partnership with the police and children's social care services to ensure that the young person is protected as far as possible and warmly welcomed back.

Leadership and management

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

Young people live in the home that is effectively and efficiently managed in line with its clear Statement of Purpose. Young people receive comprehensive written information and induction to the service. They know what to expect and what is expected from them.

The home's commitment to the promotion of diversity and equality is solid. Good practice in this respect is integral to the service. Young people receive appropriate support in relation to their cultural background and personal identity. Their needs in this respect are identified and positively addressed in both daily living and care planning.

The home has a capacity for continuing improvement. The requirement made at the

last inspection has been addressed fully and recommendations have been acted on. The management and staff keep up to date with professional developments and are fully aware of the recent changes in the National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes and the associated regulations. All policies, procedures and practices have been reviewed and updated in the light of these changes. The service is looking into ways of improving its monitoring processes and has commenced more comprehensive consultation with the professionals outside of the home. A clear service development plan is in place. Information sharing internally and externally is very good. The effective communication is successfully underpinned by excellent record keeping.

Young people receive consistently good support from a stable staff team. They are well looked after by staff who are committed, well trained and well supported themselves. However, the good staff supervision arrangements that are in place do not include the manager. The other weakness is that although the staff are competent and many have some qualifications, only 40% have completed the relevant National Vocational Qualification in working with children and young people.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.