

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC032496
Inspection date	15/06/2011
Inspector	Anthony Kyem
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	25/01/2011
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2011

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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 provides care and accommodation for up to six young people of either sex from 11 to 17 years of age. The home is registered with Ofsted to provide services to young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Young people receive care on a medium to long-term basis. The home's primary purpose is to support young people to return home, wherever possible.

The home is a purpose built, detached property situated on a private residential estate. The home has access to public transport links, nearby towns and cities.

Overall effectiveness

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

Young people make excellent progress in relation to their individual starting points. They respond exceptionally well to the support provided to them, by enthusiastic staff. Young people live in a highly supportive environment, which promotes their needs and positive outcomes. Young people's needs are comprehensively identified and placement plans are used by staff, to address them.

Young people's views and opinions are listened too. Their views about the home are regularly sought and this enables them to have a positive influence in decisions made within the home. Young people are actively involved with all aspects of their care and they are fully involved in any decisions made about them.

Young people receive continuity so they are able to form trusting relationships with the same staff that support and protect them. Relationships between staff and young people are outstanding. Young people confirm that they trust staff and they say, staff have a positive influence in their lives. One young person told the inspector, 'Staff are really brilliant. They help you out a lot. If you need someone to speak to there always there for you... I'd say it's excellent here, because it's like your own home'. Young people also reported that they felt safe living at the home and that staff promoted their safety.

The home is managed efficiently. The manager reviews the home's performance to make sure that the home is meeting all young people's needs. The home promotes successful outcomes and young people clearly benefit from the excellent support provided to them. A young person's guardian says, 'I am of the view that the local authority have done an excellent job in keeping (child x) involved with services and this has been in my opinion further assisted by the excellent support and assistance provided to (child x) by the setting'.

There are no requirements or recommendations made as a result of this inspection.

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people are actively supported to achieve self-confidence, emotional stability and self-worth. They learn to become more resilient by developing a positive view of self. Link workers provide outstanding levels of support, to help young people make positive choices. Young people are supported to understand their individual backgrounds as this helps them to make sense of their past experiences. The support provided to young people is extensive and staff are creative in their ways of working with them.

All of the young people attend school. Some undertake voluntary work, or work experience. Young people's opportunities to succeed are enhanced as their school attendance is extremely positive. Young people are actively supported to pursue further education to enable them to achieve their true potential. Their aspirations are supported to help them achieve their personal goals.

Young people are supported by staff to complete relevant training which helps them acquire essential life skills. They learn to undertake independent living tasks successfully, with guidance and support from staff. Staff assess young people's competence and they provide advice and support, where necessary. This allows young people to become more independent and it develops their self-confidence, knowledge and skills. Those moving onto to independence are successfully involved in education, training or employment to improve their outcomes.

Young people's health needs are met comprehensively. Their physical and emotional health is promoted exceptionally well. Young people have access to a wide range of health services and those who require specialist support, receive the support they need to promote their positive health. Young people's health needs are monitored and staff support young people to develop a healthy lifestyle.

Young people are consulted and supported to sustain contact with their families and friends. The home's capacity to support contact and establish positive relationships with young people's families is met exceptionally well. A parent says, 'I can only thank you for making X's time there with you so good. I know he misses you all as he speaks about you still.'

Quality of care

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

Young people are extensively involved in the decisions made about them. They have frequent opportunities provided for them to meet with staff and represent their views. Young people's meetings and one-to-one meetings are both held for such purposes. Young people enjoy excellent relationships with staff and this underpins the extent to which consultation is both meaningful and purposeful.

Staff are extremely child focused and this is strongly evidenced in their day-to-day practice. For example, young people have significant influence in the way the home is run and as a result of consultation with young people, the home now provides a well resourced beauty salon and a fully equipped gymnasium.

Young people know how to complain and they have every confidence in the manager's ability to respond to any issues of concern. They have access to the children's rights service and they have information provided to them, to help them report any issues of concern. Young people know how to contact their independent reviewing officer and the children's rights service.

The home has excellent systems in place, to ensure the needs of young people are being met. Following careful assessment of need, placement plans are implemented in consultation with young people. This ensures young people are central to this process. Placement plans are kept under constant review and this enables staff to implement any changes, if additional needs are identified. Young people's needs are clearly understood and key working is used by staff, to review young people's progress.

Staff, promote young people's good health and their physical and emotional well-being. They ensure young people have access to appropriate health services, such as dentists, doctors and opticians. Specialist support is provided for those young people, who require it. Young people receive advice with any health issues and they are actively encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle.

The accommodation provided for young people is outstanding. The home is decorated and furnished to high quality standards and it provides young people with a warm, homely and tastefully decorated home. Young people show pride in their home and they are actively involved in choosing the furnishings and decoration. Young people's bedrooms are personalised in accordance with their individual needs and wishes.

Young people benefit from an extremely well resourced home. The home has a music room, education and games area, gymnasium, art room and beauty salon. The home has outdoor sports facilities for young people's use and a fruit and vegetable garden. The garden is beautifully maintained and has a designated wild life area for young people's recreational use. The home provides young people with good access to local places of interest, such as libraries, shopping centres and sports facilities.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people feel safe living at this home. They are provided with good advice on keeping themselves safe, particularly when out in the community. Young people say, 'staff will always ring us to make sure that were ok.' The home has purchased panic alarms for young people's use, to promote their personal safety.

Young people are protected from all forms of abuse and exploitation. Staff are trained in child protection to enable them to recognise and report suspected abuse. Allegations of abuse are dealt with professionally in accordance with the home's procedures to safeguard. This ensures young people are protected. Agreed protocols are followed by staff to promote young people's safe return, if young people are missing. This enables staff to work with the local police to locate young people quickly and promote their well-being and safety. Reports indicate there has been a positive reduction in the number of unauthorised absences.

Young people live in a safe, stimulating and supportive environment. Young people are encouraged to behave responsibly and they are supported to get along with their peers. There are no issues with bullying and young people have positive relationships with staff and their peers. Positive behaviour is promoted and the use of restraint is rare. Young people's behaviours are managed safely and sanctions used by staff are fair. Robust arrangements are in place to ensure that staff are suitable and safe to work with children.

Young people live in a safe environment, which is kept free from potential hazards to their safety.

Leadership and management

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

The home employs an experienced, dedicated and child-centred manager, who demonstrates effective leadership and competence. The staff team employed are highly motivated. They work hard to ensure they meet the aims and objectives, as described, within the home's Statement of Purpose. Young people receive excellent support, and an outstanding quality of care.

Staff are well trained and skilled. All staff are appropriately qualified to meet young people's diverse needs. One young person wrote, 'I am going to change my life for the better. Staff refuse to let me go down again, which makes me feel twice as strong...I have so much respect for them, their work and the things they do for me. I am going to prove to all of them that I'm not going to go down. I'm going to go as high as I possibly can.'

The manager understands the strengths of the home and areas for future development. They consistently review the home's performance so that they know how well the home is operating. They scrutinise the home's administration systems, to make sure that what staff do for young people, they do exceptionally well.

External monitoring visits are thoroughly undertaken twice a year. These are in addition to independent monitoring visits, which are undertaken each month. Combined, these systems are used very effectively to improve the home's performance. The home has a proven track record of compliance with the standards and regulations and there are no recommendations or requirements from the previous inspection.

The views of young people, their social workers and families are exceptionally positive and testament to the outstanding work undertaken. The home actively seeks the views of parents and professionals, to assess the extent to which stakeholders are happy with the services provided.

Young people's records are kept up to date and they provide an accurate account of a young person's life within the home. Young people have access to their files, so they are able to record their views and opinions. Their memorable moments are captured and this enables them to retain positive memories about the home and their time there.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.