

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Jacqui Gosling
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is operated by a local authority. The home is registered as a children's home for up to six young people at any one time. The service offers short break care only for children and young people with severe learning and/or physical disabilities of either gender.

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**.

Young people experience excellent levels of care and support in this service. The effectiveness with which the setting provides personalised care is outstanding. Young people are treated with respect and dignity, and are central to all care planning and decisions that affect their lives. Parents, social workers and other stakeholders comment on the significant improvements and outcomes achieved by young people at this setting. Young people say 'they feel safe whilst they are staying here.'

This service is exceptionally well managed and staff are highly committed to improving the lives of young people, and enabling them to reach their full potentials. The home has a history of outstanding practice indicated within previous Ofsted reports. The management of the home is proactive in ensuring the service continuously builds upon all areas of good practice and evolves with the needs of the young person as its primary driver.

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people receive outstanding care from a provision that places young people at the heart of all they do. Exceptional levels of care and support from very experienced and motivated staff enable young people to maximise their individual potential. Parents, schools, health professionals and the short break service work well together, in helping young people with complex learning and physical disabilities achieve in all

aspects of their lives. Young people successfully and imaginatively drive their individual diverse care and support needs, participating in a range of consultations and group initiatives such as the children's forum.

Young people benefit from a high level of continuity and professional transitional support between the family, school and the centre, enabling individual care needs and agreed targets to be met and often exceeded. Young people thrive and develop high levels of self-esteem, social identity and independence, within their levels of understanding and ability. Individual and group activities are stimulating and wide ranging, for example, bowling. This enhances young people's skills and social relationships. This is enthusiastically supported by comments received from the parents for one young person, 'My child now engages with lots more young people, has grown more independent of thoughts and views around care needs, and has a voice that influences how the service operates.' Young people attend educational placements suitable to their individual learning and health needs. Parents facilitate attendance and the home liaises consistently with all education providers, ensuring that communication is current and robust, and contributions are efficiently made to all care planning arrangements.

Young people receive high levels of personalised care in a warm and nurturing environment. Communication with young people is a key strength in this service. Staff work creatively and resourcefully identifying those methodologies that best meet individual needs. Examples of communication aids used with young people are, picture exchange communication symbols. The effective and proactive partnerships between the service and other stakeholders, ensures that young people are consistently cared for across the environments. This partnership ensures young people are fully supported to achieve their individual potential, educationally, physically and as inclusive citizens.

Specific and measurable targets are set for all young people with regular reviews. These targets identify areas in a young person's life which are achievable, and will greatly enhance their future independence and support needs. Young people play an active role in their transition plans communicating their views at all stages. This engenders a culture that is fully committed to comprehensively meeting the diverse needs of young people with complex learning and physical disabilities.

Quality of care

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

Young people receive a service that is both imaginative and stimulating enabling full participation in their own care arrangements. They are cared for in an environment that unquestionably respects and values the individual, with differences actively celebrated and encouraged. Staff are highly motivated and display care and support that is fully congruent with the philosophy of the service.

Care planning is current. Plans are holistic and responsive to the specific cultural and complex needs of the individual. Short breaks plans are designed around the ethos of strengthening the family through nurturing and progressive support. Regular reviews

with parents, educational provisions, social workers and health care professionals, ensure young people receive specialist care, enabling them to flourish from their starting points. Parents feel that they maintain their primary responsibilities. They play a central role in decisions taken about their child during stays at the home. The service actively encourages parental participation and effectively and efficiently communicates all progress and areas of concern. Comments received from parents include, 'Communication with staff is excellent they make me feel very welcome, also assist me to access equipment to make life at home easier for my child.' 'They contact me if there are any health concerns and we agree together, what's best for my child'.

Young people are cared for in an environment which actively promotes and rewards positive behaviour. This approach enables young people to build strong and constructive relationships with staff and their peers. For young people with specific learning needs, staff are able to identify a child's anxieties through observation and different communication systems. Parents indicate that they are fully able to understand any upsets or concerns their child may be experiencing through mood changes, and would know if they were unhappy at the service. Consequently, no complaints have been made since the last inspection.

The staff hold knowledge of all young people's complex needs. For example, staff welcomed all young people into the centre, greeting them warmly and enthusiastically. Staff individually supported young people to identify their rooms for the duration of their stay. Communication aids were readily available to enable young people to comprehensively engage in their care, while promoting optimum understanding and relationship building. Social workers indicated 'Staff show a real awareness of individual young people's needs.'

The home provides an excellent environment providing young people with specific services to meet their unique needs. Young people's physical, emotional and psychological health needs are identified through proficient and robust partnership planning with health services, social workers and families. For those young people requiring high dependency care, high quality accommodation and equipment is available, with staff trained to utilise these resources in best meeting individual needs. The physical environment and furnishings are of a very good standard, and influenced by the views and opinions of young people. The service has many facilities both indoors and outdoors. These include a sensory room, arts and crafts, a lounge and a variety of sensory toys alongside an outdoor play area suitable for young people with disabilities. Young people's bedrooms are decorated and furnished appropriately, an example being a 'sponge bob' decorated room. Young people participate in purchasing the resources within the centre. Picture boards and art work on display highlight young people's inclusion in wide ranging consultation events, promoting inclusion in all decision-making.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people are safe at this short break service. Staff provide young people with a safe and a highly stimulating environment during their stay. Risk assessments are current, informative and regularly reviewed. Parents stated that they are always involved in their child's reviews, enabling young people to be cared for safely and consistently during transitional arrangements. The excellent partnership work by all involved in young people's care ensures that all health and safety concerns are effectively and efficiently supported and managed. The transitions between the family home, school and the centre are comprehensively risk assessed and resources identified. A social work team leader commented, 'Young people are safeguarded and protected very well at this service.'

Safeguarding guidance and procedures are fully integrated within all aspects of practice, and supported by high levels of training to meet the needs of young people with learning and physical disabilities. Staff are highly knowledgeable and competent in recognising and responding to young people's welfare. Shift planning is robust and considers all aspects of a young person's health and safety needs during their stay. The staff show competencies and meticulous practices in booking in, and administering medication, the preparation of aids and adaptations.

Young people experience high quality nurturing, warm and positive relationships with staff. It is through these relationships that effective routines and boundaries are established. Assessments of individual behaviours and management strategies are in place. Staff have all undertaken the required physical intervention training. However, physical restraint is never required as staff fully understanding the behaviours communicated by young people.

The home environment is safe and suitably checked to ensure the maintenance of gas and electrical appliances. Fire safety is well managed and all records are appropriately stored.

Leadership and management

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

The management's arrangements for this short break service are exceptional. The Registered Manager is accomplished, highly motivated and knowledgeable. Leadership provides a clear and passionate vision. The service is both shaped and designed by young people and their families. The resource has live development plans actively influenced by wide ranging consultations with young people and other stakeholders. The commitment demonstrated to continuous needs led improvements ensures young people's needs are consistently met while building on future targets for the achievement of greater outcomes.

Young people receive excellent care from a professional, dedicated and stable staff team. The strong, visible management of the home positively promotes the ethos of care and all staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff training is excellent. There are regular opportunities for all staff to complete mandatory training

and high levels of specialist training are a key feature of this service. Staff feel the management team fully supports personal and professional development and supervision arrangements are robust and highly effective. Staff comments indicate that this is an exceptional environment to work in, with excellent supports to develop as individuals and as a team.

Monitoring arrangements are thorough and purposeful. Extensive quality assurance systems are undertaken internally and by external visitors ensuring this service consistently evolves. The Statement of Purpose fully reflects the ethos and functions of the setting. All regulatory and practice guidance is current.

The promotion of equality and diversity is very high in this setting. Managers and staff are significantly committed to delivering care facilitated through high levels of individual consultation. Young people are consistently developing their self and social identities, reflected in individual progress reports, and supported by comments from parents and social workers. The management and staff view young people with disabilities as individuals who have a right to experience all opportunities afforded to their peers within the community. This culture of inclusion further enhances young people's social and emotional development and sense of belonging.

Staff are highly competent, skilled and experienced in working with young people with complex learning and health needs. Exceptional and enthusiastic staff promote the wishes and feelings in all areas of a young person's care. The resourceful and inspiring management of this service ensures young people receive meticulous and innovative care within a safe and stimulating environment.

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.