

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Nicola McEvinney
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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 home is part of a local authorities children's disability service offering care for children and young people aged between five and 17 years with learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities.

The property is purpose built, all on one level and provides accommodation for seven children receiving respite services. Longer-term care can be offered to three young people within an attached bungalow, which is self-contained.

Overall effectiveness

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

This is an outstanding provision delivering an essential and valued service to families in the county. Parents speak highly of the provision commending the excellent work undertaken and commenting on the support the whole family receives. For example, a comment from a parent; 'the home has been a complete godsend for me and the rest of my family. I wouldn't change anything the staff are absolutely brilliant with both us and my daughter'.

Care plans are personalised taking full account of the individual needs of the child or young person. The promotion of equality and diversity is excellent, for example, the heritage of children and young people is explored; staff will accompany individuals if they choose to practice their faith; and staff are vigilant in ensuring children and young people access a range of facilities and are not disadvantaged by their disability.

Children and young people's views are sought by a variety of methods, for example, picture exchange communication system (PECS); electronic communicators and some individuals have spoken language. Each child or young person has a file to advise how they have their wishes and feelings made known.

Children and young people are cared for by a highly skilled and well established staff team who are highly committed to ensuring that the children and young people have fun when they attend the home.

Great care is given in matching the groups that attend the home to ensure that children and young people are compatible and are safe. Robust risk assessments are in place identifying potential risk with clear strategies minimising the risk. Staff have an excellent awareness of safeguarding issues in particular to ensure young people are cared for in a way that ensures that their privacy and dignity is respected. One

recommendation is made regarding developing a procedure in the event a child or young person becomes lost whilst away from the home.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- develop a procedure to advise staff what action they should take in the event of a child or young person getting lost whilst away from the home. (NMS 5.2)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Staff work hard to ensure children and young people develop skills to enable them to fully participate to the best of their ability in all aspects of their lives.

Staff have an excellent understanding of the specific health conditions of each child. Detailed health care plans are in place identifying the specific health needs of each child or young person with guidance on how these needs are to be met.

Staff are trained in a range of interventions, for example, catheter and stoma care; and the administration of Buccal Midazolam and Rectal Diazepam and gastrostomy feeding. Epileptic protocols and guidance on seizure management are in place. All this training is specific to the individual child or young person and ensures that they are cared for by confident competent staff giving a high standard of care.

Medication records are in good order with clear procedures in place ensuring children and young people are correctly administered to.

Quality of care

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

Relationships between staff and the children and young people are warm and nurturing. There are excellent behaviour management plans in place identifying triggers to behaviours with clear strategies in place to manage these behaviours. This ensures a consistent approach to caring for the children and young people.

Staff are proactive in ensuring children and young people's views are sought when formulating their care plans. There are excellent links with parents and carers who also contribute to these plans.

Staff are vigilant in ensuring the children and young people are not discriminated against by other services and will advocate on their behalf ensuring that they are

able to access services to lead fulfilling lives.

There are excellent care plans in place clearly identifying the individual needs of the child or young person with clear guidance in place to ensure that these needs are met. Staff work with families and schools in the formulation of these plans to ensure the children and young people are cared for consistently.

A number of services are accessed to help meet the complex and diverse needs of the children and young people. For example, the occupational therapists, speech therapists and the looked after children nurse have close links with the home. Although parents oversee the health needs of their children; staff attend health reviews and may attend medical appointments. This ensures that the home has all relevant information enabling them to care for the children and young people effectively.

Parents oversee the education of their children who receive a short break service. Those children and young people who live at the home are excellent attendees. There are effective links with schools, particularly over communication and behaviour to ensure that children and young people are responded to in a cohesive manner.

The home is an integral part of the local community and the children and young people access local services.

The home works very well with the transitions team and families to ensure that the young people have a successful transition to adult services. This input is not time limited and staff will accompany young people to help them settle in and make the move as smooth as possible, limiting disruption.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Children and young people are cared for in a safe environment. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place for each young person, the premises and activities identifying the potential risk with strategies in place to minimise this risk. Great care is given to the matching process ensuring compatibility and not putting any child or young person at risk

Each child or young person has an individual emergency evacuation plan giving comprehensive guidance on how the individual is to be moved in the event of the home needing to be evacuated. All staff are trained fire wardens and this training is updated six-monthly. Basic housekeeping duties promote fire prevention and spread. Fire procedures are prominently placed and written in a PECS format ensuring the children and young people are able to understand what to do in the event of a fire, promoting their safety.

Staff have a good awareness of safeguarding issues and have received training on

safeguarding children with disabilities. They have a good understanding of their responsibility for whistleblowing and are confident that young people are always handled sensitively with respect, ensuring that their privacy and dignity is always paramount.

None of the young people leave the home unaccompanied, however there is no clear guidance to advise staff what action to take in the event of a child or young person going missing whilst on an outing. However, to date this has not occurred.

A number of restraints are recorded, these are generally gentle holds preventing children and young people's behaviour to escalate. Behaviour management plans are excellent and clearly demonstrate how young people's behaviour is to be managed, ensuring a consistent approach.

There are robust recruitment systems in place ensuring only suitable people are employed.

Leadership and management

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

This is an exceptionally well managed home, with a management team offering effective leadership ensuring children and young people are well cared for giving them optimum life experiences.

The home strives to continue to improve the services that can be offered to children and families in the county. For example, further developing links with the hospice to enable them to offer palliative care if required, ensuring families have a continual service.

Social workers and parents speak very highly of the service. They are confident that children and young people are cared for by a dedicated staff team who are well trained and have regular updates on specific interventions. This ensures children and young people are cared for by competent staff.

There are robust monitoring systems in place ensuring the home functions effectively.

Children and young people's files contain all the necessary information, they are well organised and easy to follow.

Equality and diversity practice is **outstanding**.