

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC033817
Inspector	Joanne Vyas
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Direct Care Limited
Registered person address	Direct Care Ltd PO Box 52 Peterborough PE8 9AZ

Responsible individual	Nigel Taylor
Registered manager	Duncan James MacKenzie
Date of last inspection	25/02/2014

Inspection date	23/07/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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This home has been through a difficult time recently as some young people have persistently put themselves at risk or had profound mental health issues resulting in admissions to hospital. However, the Registered Manager and the staff have acted appropriately and in the best interest of the young people to ensure their safety. This has meant some young people have moved on as the placement was no longer appropriate for them. Nevertheless, young people continue to thrive at this home supported by a qualified and nurturing staff team. A young person was asked to say what judgement they would attribute to the home, they said, 'Amazing.'

The Registered Manager provides strong leadership and understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home. safeguarding young people is a high priority. There have been no shortfalls identified at this inspection.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and is registered to provide residential placements for up to four children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/02/2014	Interim	good progress
28/11/2013	Full	good
24/01/2013	Interim	good progress
30/05/2012	Full	good

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people are happy and relaxed in the home. Young people make good progress in this home especially with regards to their behaviour, education and emotional wellbeing. In the short time they have lived in this home, young people have grown in confidence and maturity. They are developing a positive self-view.

Young people are gaining a good understanding of making healthy choices. They usually attend healthcare appointments as appropriate and adhere to any medical advice. Young people do not take illegal drugs or drink alcohol to excess. Young people do smoke but staff speak to them about cutting down and giving up. Young people understand the value of eating a healthy diet and benefit from regular exercise.

Young people regularly attend school or an alternative educational provision and have taken their GCSE exams. They are currently waiting for their results and are expected to pass. They have plans for their future and are working towards these. Young people enjoy attending clubs in the community such as The Police Cadets.

Young people benefit from contact with their family and friends as agreed by their social worker. This enables young people to sustain attachments and build on their resilience.

Young people develop skills which will enable them to successfully embrace adulthood. They help with household tasks around the home, prepare and cook meals. They are competent in using public transport but will happily accept lifts from staff as well.

Quality of care **good**

Staff have strong relationships with young people. A young person said, 'Staff are funny.' Staff say building strong relationships with young people is very important to help young people to feel safe and secure. Nonetheless, as a good parent, staff uphold strong boundaries which further enable young people to feel secure and to flourish.

Staff know and understand the young people well. They have good information about the young people which enables them to provide a good level of care for them on a day to day basis. An external professional said, 'From my experiences with the staff, they are very supportive and caring towards the children.' A young person who responded to a survey was asked what is good about the home; they said, 'I really

like the staff and the food.' This was reiterated by young people currently residing in the home.

Young people's health is promoted. They are registered with the local doctor, dentist and opticians. Young people have access to mental health services if required. Staff talk to young people when they refuse to attend a healthcare appointment to encourage them to attend. Young people who have had physical or mental health conditions have been treated promptly and achieved a quick recovery.

Staff facilitate young people's regular attendance at their educational provision during term time. Young people enjoy school and achieve. Staff attend meetings with education professionals to ensure young people receive a good education which is suited to their learning needs.

Staff work well with other professionals building strong relationships to ensure an holistic approach to care. An external professional said, 'I have always been welcomed, treated professionally and given time and space to see my young person. It has been easy to build up relationships with the staff at the home and work with them.' Another external professional said, 'Staff are friendly within their communications with me and this has been echoed by the young person in placement.'

Young people enjoy a range of activities including swimming, day trips, the cinema and crafts. They are supported to follow their hobbies and interests such as attending clubs in the local community.

Young people are supported to make choices and decisions about their care and the running of the home. They are actively encouraged to attend meetings about them and contribute. Staff provide strategies for the young people should they become anxious during the meeting. Young people also have regular key working sessions and young people's meetings in which they can discuss concerns, the menu, activities and general household issues. Young people also provide feedback about prospective new staff as part of the recruitment process.

The home provides a warm and homely environment with photographs of the young people displayed. Young people have single bedrooms which can be locked for privacy. The home is well maintained, clean and decorated to a high standard.

Keeping children and young people safe **good**

Young people are supported by a positive and nurturing staff team who provide a consistent approach with clear rules and boundaries in place. This helps young people to feel safe and secure. The behaviour of young people is generally good. Good behaviour management plans promote positive behaviour management strategies to support young people to develop skills to manage conflict in their lives.

Staff are trained in physical intervention techniques which focus on the de-escalation of challenging behaviour. Therefore, staff rarely carry out a restraint. When responding to a survey about restraint, a young person said, 'Staff only ever restrain me to keep me safe. They always ask if I want to see a nurse or doctor but I never need to.' Another young person said that reasons for restraint are 'to keep me safe.'

Safeguarding young people is a high priority at this home. Staff are competent in their knowledge of safeguarding children and young people. An external professional said, 'I have been impressed by the dedication and enthusiasm of the staff at the home. They always present a positive attitude to discussions, and clearly hold the safeguarding of the children as their priority.' There have been issues of staff being slow to whistle blow recently but this has been effectively addressed by the Registered Manager.

Young people are safe living in this home. They do not drink alcohol to excess or take illegal drugs. Furthermore, they rarely get involved in criminal activity. Staff have provided a strong positive response in collaboration with the police when young people have dabbled in criminal activity.

Young people rarely go missing from this home. This is because they feel safe and secure. Staff have built good links with external professionals such as the police to ensure effective strategies for the safe return of young people when they do go missing. An external professional said, 'Following a recent missing incident the placement were confident and professional with liaising with two police forces with different views on the same issue. The local authority received regular updates. A really good piece of joint working.'

Staff undergo stringent vetting procedures which ensures young people are not looked after by unsuitable adults. Health and safety procedures are good and keep young people safe.

Leadership and management

good

The Registered Manager is qualified and experienced. He offers strong leadership and support for staff. The Registered Manager is clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the home and has a good development plan to work to. The requirement from the previous inspection has been fully addressed.

Staff are qualified, competent and caring. They feel well supported by the Registered Manager and other staff. A member of staff said, 'I regularly have supervisions and feel supported by my supervisor and manager.' Another member of staff said in response to what is good about the home, 'The manager and the senior workers are approachable.'

The home has a comprehensive Statement of Purpose which has issues of equality

and diversity threaded throughout the document. Young people are well informed about the home prior to arriving through the Young Person's Guide. The Registered Manager has robust monitoring systems in place which ensure the effective running of the home and includes consultation with all those involved in the home. The Registered Manager clearly strives for continuous improvement to the home.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
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.

Information 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 framework of inspection for children's homes.