

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC034415
Inspection date	12/09/2013
Inspector	Robert Curr
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	18/02/2013
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2013

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.

Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is owned and managed by a charitable trust. The home forms part of a school campus and the school is inspected separately by Ofsted. This registered service provides long term and short break services for up to 20 children and young people with learning and physical disabilities and complex health care needs. At the Hollybank site the trust also provides services for adults with complex disabilities.

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 **good**.

This home provides an extremely good provision to young people who have physical and learning difficulties and associated complex health needs. Care is well planned and personalised to meet the individual needs of those in receipt of the service. The home works closely in partnership with families to ensure that they offer the best possible care which complements the provision at home and school.

Young people enjoy their short break stays and parents say they can relax knowing that their children are in safe hands while they are away from home. Relationships between staff and young people are extremely positive and staff know the young people really well. Consequently, they are able to communicate effectively with them and are able to ascertain their views and opinions about the running of the home. The positive relationships which exist assist young people to gain trust and develop confidence.

Young people benefit from a staff team that is completely child-centred and committed to providing the best possible care. This dedication assists young people to reach their potential during their time at the home. Young people make progress in acquiring personal, social and independence skills. Health and safety practices are given a high priority in the home. One parent described the home as a 'wonderful place with a lovely community feel.'

The short falls identified during this inspection relate to improving staff supervision

and the keeping of records relating to supervision. Other areas for improvement pertain to maintaining refresher training and up- dating the missing from home procedures. These shortfalls do not presently impact negatively on the welfare and safety of the young people living at 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):

- confirm that the procedures for young people going missing are compatible with the local Runaway and Missing from Home and Care protocols (NMS 5.6)
- ensure staff are provided with regular supervision (NMS 19.4)
- ensure that supervision records kept by the home detail the time, date and length of each supervision and the record is signed by the supervisor and member of staff (NMS 19.5)
- keep staff up-to-date with professional and legal developments that reflect the needs of the home, in particular, child protection. (NMS 18.1)

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people clearly enjoy living in this home. A parent said, 'my child loves being here; his happiness is clear to see.' Young people benefit from the close contact they have with other young people, which assists them to develop a positive self-view. Another parent said, 'coming for short breaks has helped my child with their socialisation, and separation from me.'

For most of the young people who attend for short breaks, their health and education is the responsibility of their parents. For young people who live at the home, staff fully support young people to attend their education and consequently, attendance continues to be excellent. The home has good relationships with the education staff with effective communication via daily diaries; this ensures there is no disruption to young people's education.

A particular strength of this service is that young people's health needs are fully addressed. There are positive relationships between the home, families and health professionals. This means that staff are fully up to date with the young person's state of health so can care for them well. This is crucial as all the young people have complex health needs and are highly dependent on staff to meet these needs.

For young people that live at home with parents or carers, staff maintain extremely good contact. Telephone contact takes place both before and after the young

person's stay. This enables an exchange of information which benefits young people as all parties strive to work together.

Young people benefit from an environment which provides space and a diverse range of activities. The buildings provide spaces to meet the needs of the young people within three separate areas. The young people are able to engage in a range of indoor and outdoor activities. This includes active play and more passive play. The resources are diverse and meet the needs of young people who have a range of disabilities and challenging behaviours. As a result, young people are able to experience and develop from a wide range of leisure and learning activities.

Young people who have attained the age of 18 years have plans in place; however, they are still awaiting suitable alternative provision. Despite their frustrations, managers and staff work very hard to move these forward.

Quality of care

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

Young people benefit from excellent relationships with staff in the home. A parent said that their child 'loves coming to stay and is excited when they approach the home and see the staff.' The staff team is experienced and receive good quality training to enable them to confidently care for the young people. Staff know the young people really well. This assists them to offer the best possible care.

Young people are cared for in a healthy environment. The home provides a variety of freshly prepared meals for those who are able to eat orally and special diets are available, such as Halal or vegetarian foods. There is always a choice of dishes and young people are encouraged to exercise their choice.

Most of the young people who stay in the home need assistance to communicate. Staff use a range of methods to enable them to effectively converse with young people and ensure they can be understood. Staff assist young people to contribute to forum meetings where they are able to put their views and wishes forward. Young people agree that they are encouraged to make choices about their daily life and activities.

Staff support young people to attend their education. They ensure that they, and all their equipment and medication, are ready for their transition into the school. Good communication with education staff ensures that the social care staff and school are aware of any issues which may impact on young people's education.

All young people are cared for in accordance with their care plans tailored to meet individual diverse needs. Young people are assisted, where possible, to contribute to these. All staff routinely communicate with families to aid the task of reviewing these plans. The home uses internal speech and language therapy services when necessary to ensure that information collated is clear and meaningful.

Staff work alongside parents to support young people to make progress with daily living tasks. Young people's achievements are celebrated and a range of certificates and sport trophies are on display in young people's bedrooms; with other achievements being published in the internal newsletter. The home's acknowledgement of achievements assists young people to develop confidence in their abilities and gain a positive self-view.

Young people live in well-maintained houses with an on-site school. The provision is well resourced, secure and safe and maintained to a high standard. The young people are provided with regular opportunities to experience a range of activities, including trips within the local community, trips in the wider community and holidays. This means that the home is actively developing young people's social skills.

Each house provides a comfortable living environment with opportunities for computer use, play and watching television. The houses are spacious and offer space for communal and private time. One parent said, 'it is definitely a home-from-home.' The manager ensures that standards of cleanliness are high and the fabric of the home is subject to regular maintenance.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people are safe in the home and parents are confident that the home provides safe care to their children. There are no incidents of young people going missing. However, written confirmation that the missing from home protocols are in line with local procedures is not available.

Due to their complex health needs and limited communication, young people are highly vulnerable. Staff consult parents to assist in identifying risk factors, and care plans clearly identify these risk factors. 'My child is 100% safe here', said one parent. Working with parents ensures that staff are fully informed to address individual safety issues.

Staff attend training in safeguarding and child protection. All staff fully understand the procedures to follow in the event of any child protection concerns. Since the last inspection, there have been no referrals in relation to any child protection concerns.

Robust systems are in place to ensure that adults who come to work in the home have met the standards required. New staff commence an induction programme and enrol on an appropriate child care diploma. These measures mean that the home is committed to recruit and train only the most suitable people.

Safety is high priority and specialist equipment, such as hoists, are subject to regular maintenance to ensure these are safe. The home conducts regular checks in relation to gas and electrical appliances to confirm they meet safety requirements. Young people and staff are subject to fire drills from time to time. This helps to ensure they are able to evacuate the building in the event of a fire. There are no observable

hazards which could create a risk to young people.

Leadership and management

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

The manager provides good leadership in the home. There are established systems in place to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of the running of the home. Regulation 33 visits occur at regular intervals and the Registered Manager addresses any issues raised through these. She also fulfils her commitment to completing Schedule 6 reports, and Regulation 34 reports are prepared in accordance with regulations.

A development plan is in place which is subject to regular review and includes a range of realistic targets for the home. Examples include the development of a performance management process and strengthening links between families by creating regular meetings.

The staff report feeling well supported in their role. Staff members receive supervision; however, some staff do not receive supervision at consistent intervals. Lack of meaningful supervision results in lost opportunities to guide, review and evaluate staff performance in key areas. In addition, not all supervision records include the date, time and duration of the supervision session; nor signatures of all parties. While this does not have an impact on the care and welfare of young people, it does not fully reflect secure practice.

Staff training is high priority in the home. However, refresher training in child protection is overdue for a small number of staff. Most staff have obtained an appropriate child care qualification at level 3, or are working towards this. In addition to all mandatory training, the staff team undertake specialist courses to enable them to care for young people's complex health needs. These include specialist feeding regimes, moving and handling and communication. Consequently, young people benefit from care which is appropriate to meet their complex disability needs.

Case files are stored securely in the home and are of a good standard and easy to read. As a result, staff are able to gain a good overview of the young person's specific needs, which assists staff to offer the best possible care.

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* and the evaluation schedule for the inspection of children's homes.