

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035241
Inspection date	23/08/2013
Inspector	Robert Curr
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Date of last inspection	07/01/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The children's home is operated by a charitable trust and registered to accommodate four children of either sex aged from 5 to 17 years who have a sensory impairment.

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 good outcomes for young people and the quality of care is also good. The care provided is personalised and well planned and focuses on the individual needs of the young person. Young people have gained confidence which has enabled them to express their views and wishes; young people feel motivated and empowered to make choices.

Young people are supported by staff members who provide them with individual time and the opportunity to have effective one-to-one relationships. Young people say that their relationships with the staff are good and feel that the staff listen to them and respect them.

Young people say staff look after them well, give them the opportunity to progress and that they understand when they are not behaving appropriately. Consequently, young people feel respected and cared for and this has led to improvements in behaviour which is well managed. Education is a priority and young people attend school on-site. Staff provide one-to-one support with education and liaise effectively with the teachers. Healthcare is well managed and young people are encouraged and supported to attend appointments.

Safeguarding is well managed in most areas and systems are effective and provide safe care. Young people are kept safe and say that they feel safe. Leadership and management are strong in the day-to-day management arrangements and staff are motivated.

The Registered Manager has returned to work after an extended period of leave. The

organisation introduced an effective system to ensure that staff and young people had a good standard of support in the absence of the manager. Outcomes for young people are good and have been sustained.

The manager is aware of the strengths and weakness of the home. Although Regulation 34 reports are completed monthly, these are not reviewed at six monthly intervals and forwarded to Ofsted. This does not have a direct impact on the outcomes for young people. Action is being taken to improve the appearance of the home and further develop the accommodation.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure the system for monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6 is reviewed at six monthly intervals and a copy of every report sent to Ofsted within twenty eight days of completion. (Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 5, Chapter 3, paragraph 3.14)

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people are making good progress in all key areas of their lives. This is underpinned by their feelings of security in this placement. Young people say, 'it is good here because it's my home.' Key professionals say that young people are doing 'extremely well'. Young people appear to be confident and they are developing good social skills and sufficient emotional resilience to cope much better with complex relationships.

Young people's physical health, as well as their emotional health, has improved. No young people participate in offending or risk taking behaviour. Young people enjoy regular activities going out to events such as street dancing, football clubs or to the cinema with the staff. They are healthy eaters, who are very aware of the importance of maintaining a balance between nutritious food and fast foods. Young people know the importance of healthy lifestyles and are proactive in taking responsibility for their own health. In particular, managing their own medication regimes.

Young people's education is provided on site. All young people have achieved 100% attendance at school. This is a particularly notable achievement as young people previously found the whole issue of education very challenging and missed out on their education. Young people have recently taken exams and are expecting the results very soon. Young people have clear, achievable plans for their education and skill-based stages in their lives.

Most young people are in regular contact with their families, and have developed strong relationships with people outside their families who are important to them. Some young people are working on their family tree. This helps them develop a more positive self-view and greater self-knowledge and understanding.

Quality of care

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

Young people and staff demonstrate that they have warm, trusting and respectful relationships. Young people benefit from consistent behaviour management. This encourages young people to develop positive behaviour and to control the behaviours that are less positive. Young people say that staff understand them and say, 'there is always someone to talk to and staff are good at looking after me'.

Young people have an active voice and can express their views through young people's meetings and in their day-to-day contact with staff members. This results in staff and the manager adapting and modifying services within the home to follow young people's wishes.

Young people are aware of how to make a complaint within the home and they say that the staff assist them with any concerns or complaints.

The young people's guide details all the information regarding the Children's Rights officer and Ofsted should they wish to raise a concern. The guide is written in an appropriate format for people whose first language is British Sign Language or Sign Supported English.

To ensure young people have good opportunities to develop and progress, each young person is supported by a placement plan. Plans are up-to-date and generally very detailed and regularly reviewed.

Health planning is managed well and is regularly reviewed. All young people living at the home have access to specialist therapeutic and counselling services from the on-site psychiatric nurse, on-site counsellor, or local Community Area Mental Health Services for Deaf Children.

All young people are supported to attend routine visits to doctors and dentists. Current health planning is detailed and the staff work very hard to acquire past medical information. This supports young people to develop an understanding about their medical history so they can make informed decisions in relation to their health. The staff are very motivated towards sports and promoting a healthy lifestyle. Consequently, a variety of healthy activities are enjoyed by the young people.

Staff work closely with the teaching staff in the on-site school attended by the young people. They receive reports from the school as to any incidents that have occurred there. They assist young people with their homework on their return from school and

take an active interest in any projects. Children are encouraged to view education and their attainments as something positive and beneficial for them. They speak positively about their school experiences.

Young people benefit from personalised care which is very responsive to young people's specific cultural needs. This makes a strong contribution to young people's clear sense of belonging in the home. The home is well located, with easy access to local amenities and offers ample accommodation. The home is clean and comfortable.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people are very clear that they feel safe in the home. They present as being very comfortable and relaxed in this home. Young people are very confident about approaching staff and having their needs safely met.

Young people are further protected by living in a safe and secure environment, which is generally very well supported by routine health and safety checks. Young people have individualised risk assessments and personalised evacuation plans related to fire safety. Young people enjoy agreed periods of unsupervised free time. All young people have mobile phones so that they can contact the home at any time. This helps ensure young people's safety outside the home. Bullying is not currently an issue in this home.

Young people do not go missing from this home. This is a positive contribution to their safety and well-being. The home has an up-to-date missing from home policy in line with current local police and local authority protocol. Behaviour management in this home is proactive, with the emphasis on building a trusting relationship with the young person and pre-empting any challenging behaviour. This considered approach is clearly effective because there are no restraints and children choose not to go missing from the home. Sanctions used are fair and relate mainly to behaviour management. Young people confirm this; they agree that when sanctions are imposed by the staff they think that they are 'really fair'. Young people's views and their written response are recorded in the incident and sanctions book. An evaluation of the effectiveness of all sanctions is carried out.

Leadership and management

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

Young people and staff benefit from a manager that is sufficiently experienced and qualified. There were no requirements or recommendations raised at the previous inspection visit in January 2013.

The home has shown capacity for continuing improvement. Internal refurbishments and the development of the overall accommodation has been identified, providing

increased opportunities for current young people.

A comprehensive Statement of Purpose is in place which informs stake holders, staff and other parties of the aims and objectives of the home along with services and facilities provided. The Statement of Purpose and young people's guide are regularly reviewed to ensure they are up to date and consistent with practice.

Staffing levels are adequate and are increased according to the needs of the children and the home. As a result, young people are well supported individually and there is greater harmony in the home with a reduction of negative behaviour over time.

To ensure that the home provides a high standard of care, regular checks and monitoring is undertaken by the registered manager. In addition, checks are carried out by a person independent of the home to ensure that standards of care provided in the home are maintained with an action plan to address any shortfalls or areas identified for development.

All young people have detailed personal files and records which help them understand their episodes of being looked after. Young people's records are clear and legible and provide each with a picture of their life, the decisions that have been made and the plans agreed for their future.

All significant events relating to the protection of children accommodated in the home are notified by the registered person to the appropriate authorities, and appropriate action is taken following any incidents. Statutory reviews are up-to-date and there are very good professional relationships with relevant partners. Consequently when an issue arises, appropriate action is taken to provide effective support from all parties.

The management of the home has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. Input is also gained from placing authorities and young people in the evaluation of the service. However, this input is not detailed within the regulatory quality assurance reports. These reports are not forwarded to Ofsted at the recommended intervals.

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.