

Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC035247        |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 19 January 2010 |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Sean White      |
| <b>Type of Inspection</b>      | Key             |

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| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 20 July 2009 |
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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.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

## The inspection judgements and what they mean

|               |                                                               |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Outstanding:  | this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality |
| Good:         | this aspect of the provision is strong                        |
| Satisfactory: | this aspect of the provision is sound                         |
| Inadequate:   | this aspect of the provision is not good enough               |

## **Service information**

### **Brief description of the service**

This children's home provides short-break care and accommodation for children with a disability and sensory impairments from 9 years old up to 17 years old.

The home is a large two-storey dwelling set in its own grounds. There is a lounge with a television and DVD player, a dining room, an activities room, a large soft play area, a sensory room and a large enclosed garden with outdoor play equipment.

The home has its own minibuss equipped to transport children who use a wheelchair.

### **Summary**

This was a key inspection and all national minimum standards were inspected.

This home takes seriously the needs of children with a disability and its systems and practices are aimed at promoting their welfare and safety in all areas of their lives. There is a strong approach to ensuring children's health needs are met through cooperation with parents and health specialists.

The commitment to ensuring children are safe and cared for in ways that promote their dignity and well-being is a positive feature of the home. The manager and staff are fully informed of safeguarding matters and demonstrate a clear understanding of procedures.

The children are enabled and encouraged to participate in activities and pursuits suitable for their abilities and the staff assist those with communication difficulties to demonstrate their wishes and choices. Education is encouraged and there are good working relationships with schools.

There is a careful and considered approach to admitting children and ensuring that their needs can be met. Planning and reviewing is well managed with close cooperation with social workers, parents and schools.

There are well-established links with adult services to plan for and manage older children's needs in their approach into adulthood.

The home is well managed, efficiently organised and staffed by experienced, motivated and committed workers. It is well maintained, suitably adapted and provides a warm and comfortable experience for children receiving short-term care.

The overall quality rating is good.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

The manager and staff have worked conscientiously to address the issues raised following the last inspection. This includes the production of a suitable children's guide, a better means of recording when restraint is used, a complaints procedure more appropriate for children with disabilities and clearer risk assessments.

## Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The manager and staff take seriously the health needs of children and ensure that systems and practices are aimed at meeting these.

Careful consideration is given to menu planning with an emphasis on wholesome meals prepared with fresh produce. Care is taken to ensure that children with particular health or dietary needs are catered for in a way that does not compromise their condition and is in accordance with medical advice and direction.

Although the children stay at the home for only short periods of time, with parents taking main responsibility for ongoing health matters, each child's health and medical needs are fully recorded and these determine the care that is provided. Workers are fully informed and knowledgeable about the wide range of often complex needs and exercise their responsibilities accordingly. This includes working closely with parents and schools to ensure there is a coordinated approach to managing children's health effectively.

The home does not stock medication. Each child arrives with their prescribed medicines and care is taken to check this in on arrival and out on departure. This correlates with a well recorded drugs and medication administration system ensuring that all children receive what is prescribed in the appropriate dosage. Arrangements are in place with healthcare professionals to administer for more complex needs, for example injections.

## Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The manager and staff are motivated and committed to the well-being and safety of children, and undertake their responsibilities and duties in a way that protects each child.

Staff understand the rights of children with disabilities to be cared for in a way that recognises their dignity and work in a way that ensures that all necessary intervention is undertaken with sensitivity and consideration. Procedures are clear in informing staff of how children's privacy and dignity are maintained.

Most children cared for in this home do not have the ability to make formal complaints. There are, nevertheless, strategies that the staff use to elicit choice and satisfaction and realistic responses are used to achieve positive outcomes. The home works closely with parents and encourages their participation in the care being provided; this includes a formal complaints procedure. The new corporate complaints procedure includes a pictorial guide for children with limited abilities. This, however, is not yet finalised and published.

Children are cared for in a sensitive and conscientious way that recognises their right to be safeguarded from any form of abuse. Workers are familiar with the reporting procedure and confident that any suspicions of abuse are handled in the required manner. Allegations are responded to and managed in the manner determined by procedures and notified to the registration authority in a timely way.

Admissions to the home are arranged and managed in a way that avoids the possibility of bullying or children taking advantage of others. There is careful consideration given to achieving

the most harmonious balance of needs and abilities to enable children to enjoy their stay in a safe environment.

Care is taken to ensure that the security of very vulnerable children is maintained at all times in order that they do not go missing or get lost. Workers are diligent in their oversight of children and none have been missing for some considerable time.

The manager and staff have considerable knowledge of working with children with disabilities and exercise their duties in respect of managing needs with understanding. Care is taken to ensure that children with limited or no understanding of acceptable social behaviour are enabled to live as full a life as their abilities allow. Challenging behaviour is sensitively and carefully handled in a way that safeguards children from harm whilst enabling them free expression of their needs and wishes.

The recruitment of workers is managed in a rigorous way that ensures only the most suitable people are employed in the home.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

The range of needs of the children accommodated in this home are wide, varied and often complex. These are clearly identified in care plans that are managed by identified workers for each child. This enables a consistent approach to understanding these needs through good communication to be achieved. The staff develop effective working relationships with parents and schools to ensure that information about children's needs is up to date and all necessary specialist support is sourced as required.

Staff encourage children to express their wishes and feelings in whatever form the child has abilities; this often involves using a range of ways of eliciting and understanding the choices being expressed.

All children attend specialist education provision as determined by their statements of special educational needs. The staff have strong working relationships with all the schools attended and information exchange in respect of progress and needs is well established. Good recording ensures all staff are fully informed of children's current circumstances.

Children are encouraged and enabled to enjoy a range of leisure and social activities. The home is well provided with facilities for children with disabilities to use and every effort is made to ensure that they express their choices regarding what they wish to do.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

There is a careful and considered approach to determining the needs of children admitted to the home and these are clearly recorded in care and placement plans. All plans are reviewed in line with legislative requirements and plans amended as required or necessary.

Care is taken to ensure that parents and significant others are fully involved in the planning for their children and are an integral part of the reviewing process. Their views and wishes are taken seriously and are central to the care and support provided for children.

There are well established admission and discharge procedures in place that involve close cooperation between the home, parents and schools. This includes both the sensitive managing of children's anxieties and the more practical aspects of ensuring their personal items, drugs and clothing are carefully checked on admission and discharge.

The children enjoy warm, caring relationships with sensitive and committed staff and are encouraged and enabled to express their views and wishes regarding the support provided. There are strategies used to enable children with limited or no language abilities to ask for what they want in respect of activities, food and drink. Some children have been involved in making a DVD about life in the home which demonstrates the inclusive and encouraging nature of the establishment.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Although it is not the responsibility of the home to prepare children for independence and life into adulthood, there are, nevertheless, strong working relationships with adult services that plan for older children's futures. This includes determining future needs and planning for how these will be managed and met.

The home is situated in a residential village and has no external features that suggest it is a children's home. The interior is well adapted, within the limits of its structure, is warm, comfortable and has spacious communal and play areas. It is well maintained, decorated and furnished and there are good facilities to provide for the physical needs of children with a disability.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The home's Statement of Purpose and underpinning policies and procedures provide for a clear focus on the needs of children receiving short stay residential care. The children's guide and information pack now provides a clearer format for those with limited language abilities, soon to be supplemented by a DVD produced with the involvement of some of the children.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. There is a clear focus on the rights of children with disabilities and their place in society and an active approach to welcoming children and parents from different backgrounds.

There is a well-established staff team, many of whom have been in post for a considerable length of time. There is a very low staff turnover which provides for the sustaining of skills and knowledge, and consistency of practice. Training programmes address the developmental needs of workers and their impact on the welfare of children.

The arrangements for monitoring the home are consistent and undertaken conscientiously; monitoring reports demonstrate a focus on maintaining standards. Issues highlighted as requiring attention are dealt with in a robust and timely way.

Children's development is continually monitored and case recording reflects their needs and progress. There is a strong approach to daily recording that enables the whole staff team to

have up to date, clear information about children, their circumstances and any changes that have occurred.

The home is managed efficiently and organised effectively to meet the needs of children receiving short stay care.

## **What must be done to secure future improvement?**

### **Statutory requirements**

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, The Childrens Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

| Standard | Action | Due date |
|----------|--------|----------|
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### **Recommendations**

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

- ensure the new complaints procedure is put in place at the earliest opportunity. (NMS 16)