

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Louisa Bayley
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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 children's home is owned by a registered charity. The home provides long-term accommodation for four young people, of either gender, aged between eight and 18 years.

Overall effectiveness

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

Young people in this home say that they feel safe and cared for. Staff in the home are supportive of the young people and there are some good outcomes. Young people have individual plans, appropriate to their age, with a focus on independence. However, there are also some identified weaknesses and areas for development. There are some recording issues, no risk assessments in respect of young people having keys to the home, damage that has not been repaired and restricted access to the telephone. Further, there is little evidence of promotion of diversity or of gaining the views of young people regarding the care they receive.

Young people say they are happy in the home, one young person said 'the home is good how it is, I would not change anything'.

Areas for improvementStatutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
18 (2001)	ensure that young people who are no longer entitled to receive full time compulsory education, are assisted with the making of arrangements for education, training and employment (Regulation 18.3)	02/12/2011
15 (2001)	ensure that young people accommodated in the home are provided at all reasonable times with access to a telephone on which to make and receive private calls without reference to persons working in the home (Regulation 15.4a)	02/12/2011
31 (2001)	ensure that the home is reasonably decorated and maintained, with specific regard to repairing damage in the home (Regulation 31.2e)	02/12/2011
16 (2001)	ensure that written records are kept of any allegation of abuse or neglect, and of the action taken in response (Regulation	02/12/2011

	16.2d)	
34 (2001)	ensure that the system in place for monitoring and improving the quality of care provides for consultation with young people accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities (Regulation 34.3)	02/12/2011
11 (2001)	ensure proper provision is made for the care and supervision of young people accommodated in the home with specific regard to thorough risk assessments and controls for young people who have keys to the home. (Regulation 11.1b)	02/12/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure that information about the young person is recorded clearly and in a way which will be helpful to the young person when they access their files now or in the future, with specific regard to using appropriate terminology to describe behaviours (NMS22.5)
- ensure all supervisions are recorded in a record kept by the home detailing the time, date and length. The record is signed by the supervisor and the member of staff at the end of the supervision (NMS 19.5)
- ensure that the home's procedures are compatible with and have regard to Runaway and Missing from Home and Care protocols and procedures maintained and managed by the local police. (NMS 5.6)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people are working on independence programmes in readiness for transition to adulthood. They are supported to budget appropriately, shop and plan menus. Levels of engagement are inconsistent, however, staff are actively promoting and supporting young people to make progress. A particular area of achievement for all young people has been in developing their independent travel skills.

Educational achievement is evident for young people who have completed statutory education. Young people who are not attending college lack an organised and stimulating routine. Staff have supported young people to access courses or training, however, there is a clear lack of engagement. This means that some young people are not benefiting from any educational focus nor developing their skills in readiness for work.

Young people benefit from positive contact with their families and friends. Staff in the home are supportive in facilitating contact but are also mindful of promoting

independence. Young people are taken one way by staff and travel one way themselves. Consequently, this helps young people to build their confidence in making their own arrangements.

Young people rarely contribute their views in regard to the running of the home. There is no recent record of young people's views and wishes and no recent residents meetings. However, young people say they are happy that staff listen to them and act upon their requests. Young people contribute to the wider community through participation of the in-care council. This means that young people act as representatives of the home, building their confidence in different situations. An example of this is the involvement of young people on an interview panel for a member of managerial staff.

Quality of care

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

Young people say they have positive relationships with the staff. They identify with their key workers; one young person said 'we just hit it off straight away'. Young people also report they have good relationships with some residents in the home.

There has been some progress in young people's behaviour in the home. However, a common view from other professionals involved with the young people, is one of a lack of firm and consistent boundaries within the home. A further shared view is that there is a lack of consequences placed upon young people following inappropriate behaviour.

Medication is effectively managed and staff support young people to access healthcare. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services attend staff meetings with a view to offering strategies for individual young people. However, there is a lack of recording with regard to the support given to young people to access psychological intervention, strategies used or levels of success.

Staff support young people's cultural needs through ensuring access to faith based worship, festivals and groups. Young people are able to explore a range of issues within key work sessions, including personal identity, cultural identity, family background and sexual health.

Young people are fully aware of how to make a complaint. Where complaints have been made, the home has responded accordingly to achieve resolution.

The home is generally comfortable and well equipped however there is damage that has not been repaired. The organisation reports that this is due to be addressed shortly as part of a programme of updating and maintenance. The phone room in the home was locked during the inspection, meaning that young people did not have access to the phone without reference to staff.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people say they feel safe. There have been no incidents of restraint and very few unauthorised absences. The environment provided within the home is safe, however, there are no detailed risk assessments pertaining to young people having keys to the house. Residents have brought other young people into the home during the night which poses a number of risks including; lack of accountability in case of fire, the potential of inappropriate or abusive behaviours between residents and others and lack of awareness of whether young people have returned home.

Young people have access to an independent visitor on a monthly basis and also have contact with social workers, key workers and other professionals with whom they can raise issues of safety.

The home has a good relationship with the local police and this is promoted through visits to the home when officers are passing by. The home does not have an up to date protocol available regarding supportive action and arrangements with the local police when young people go missing.

The home follows the process for notifiable events; however, there is a lack of recording with regard to the action taken following an incident. Consequently, it is unclear how the incident has been dealt with and whether safeguarding concerns have been fully addressed.

Leadership and management

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

Staff in the home are appropriately qualified and trained to care for young people. There is a good system in place to manage and update mandatory training; some staff have had the opportunity to visit Germany to observe the social pedagogue model. Staff say they receive regular, supportive supervision. The records detailing frequency and duration of supervision are not complete.

The requirement raised in the previous inspection, with regard to fire drills, has been addressed. A recommendation to ensure all certificates detail the name and address of the home has also been met.

The aims and objectives in the Statement of Purpose are clear, however, representatives of the placing authority have concerns regarding how young people's psychological needs are being met.

Regulation 33 visits are completed monthly and reports are submitted within the required timeframe. Monthly monitoring of the quality of care takes place, however, this does not provide for consultation with young people about their welfare.

Some records pertaining to young people are unclear and some aspects of contact and action taken have not been recorded. The language and terminology used to record young people's behaviour within reports and case notes is unclear and not fully descriptive.

All health and safety checks with regard to the home are up to date. There are clear records to indicate staff and young people are aware of fire evacuation plans.

Equality and diversity practice is **satisfactory**.