

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Jacqui Gosling
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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

The home is registered for up to six young people aged between 12 and 17 years. It accommodates young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties for medium to long-stay periods. It is owned and operated by a private organisation. Currently, five young people are living here.

Overall effectiveness

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

This home is good and cares for young people well. Young people are provided with care that offers them the opportunity of having positive experiences, opportunities and outcomes. The quality of the relationships between staff and young people is good and young people confirmed that their views were taken into account in all areas of life in the home.

Young people's safety is a priority of the home and the staff are proactive in communicating this to young people. Young people have been supported to continue their education.

Staff are enthusiastic, well trained and understand the complex needs of young people well. Other professionals commented 'staff genuinely care about the young people'. The manager understands the strengths of the home and areas for further development.

Areas for improvement

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Outcomes for young people are good. Young people benefit from the opportunity to attend educational provisions, which are tailored to their individual needs. Contact with parents or significant others is encouraged. They have opportunities to develop their independence skills.

There is a good approach to promoting the physical, emotional, and psychological health of young people and they are cared for in a warm, caring, nurturing environment with appropriate boundaries in place. Young people are in good health because staff ensure that all their health needs are properly assessed and visits with the doctor, dentist and optician are well planned and take place as required. Young people eat well and enjoy their food. They are actively encouraged to get involved with preparing and cooking meals.

Staff undertake regular one-to-one meetings in to order to help young people develop a positive image and feel safe and secure. Young people's views are central to how the home is operating and developing. This ensures young people's views are heard and is good practice.

Young people also benefit from appropriate contact with their family, friends and other people who are important to them. They are also encouraged to invite parents and friends to the home and spend free time in the community where risk assessments show it is appropriate. The staff are effective in supporting the practical arrangements, such as setting up visits and support with travel arrangements.

The home provides young people with opportunities to make good progress in their education. Education plans include realistic targets which young people understand and can meet. Young people are enabled to make good progress in relation to their starting points across all aspects of their welfare and development.

Young people are encouraged to develop their independence skills, with support and guidance by staff. Young people are able to shop for food, cook meals and budget for items they need. Cultural needs are well supported and give young people the opportunities to continue their faith and have food and meals prepared in accordance with their beliefs, for example, Halal meat.

Quality of care

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

Staff provide a good level of care to the young people ensuring that they positively gain from their placements.

Young people have positive relationships with the staff at this home. There is a friendly and good natured atmosphere, which young people find helpful and supportive. For example, birthdays and religious festivals are celebrated by the staff team to make the day a special event for young people. The use of measures of control is fair and realistic. Young people understand the boundaries in place to ensure they are safe and well. Young people are asked to sign all records relating to the use of measures of control.

Young people said they understand the complaints procedures, although they rarely need to use it. There is information about complaints written in a style suitable for young people to access, within the guide to the home. Young people confirm they were given this and had it explained to them when they first arrived.

Placement plans are well written and include the needs of young people. Young people say they are aware of their contents. Information on health, education and cultural needs are reflected within plans which are regularly reviewed in suitable timescales. Parents commented this is an excellent placement, their child's needs are well met.

Young people's views are actively sought in all aspects of their care, for example, activities, meal choices as well as decoration and furnishings. A young person said 'I get to do lots of activities living here'.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people are safe, valued and respected at this home. Staff are aware of safeguarding procedures and how to report in the event of an incident occurring. Regular training provides staff with current knowledge and skills. Bullying is also acted upon promptly with staff aware of how this can impact on young people. Young people do not feel that bullying is a concern at this time. Staff respect young people's personal space. A young person commented 'I feel safe here, staff treat me with respect'.

The home is secure and maintenance of the building is ongoing. Fire safety is effective and well planned. Regular drills are practised with young people and staff are all aware of the safe evacuation procedures. The fire risk assessment is updated as required. Electrical equipment is regularly serviced.

Staff are clear about how they would respond to a young person missing from the home and records reflect that practice follows the home's procedures. Staff recognise the level of vulnerability young people in the home present and act accordingly. The Registered Manager and staff are aware of recent national guidance on missing from care protocols.

Staff receive annual refresher training on the safe use of physical intervention techniques. When restraints occur appropriate procedures are followed and clear records are kept. Staff have positive and supportive relationships with the young people. A young person said 'the staff are good, they understand me'.

There is a safe recruitment process. All staff have suitable checks, such as references, completed before they start working at the home. Therefore, adults who work at this home have been appropriately vetted to work safely with young people.

Leadership and management

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

The leadership and management of this home is effective in providing young people with a positive experience.

There is a comprehensive and well organised training programme for staff. Staff feel that senior members of the team provide a high level of support and guidance when required. For example, professional development is regularly reviewed during supervision and appraisal meetings. A member of staff said 'I feel supported here,

I'm given lots of advice and supervision'. Staffing levels meet the needs of the young people. Young people felt that staff were available when they wanted to talk to them or required their help.

Individuality is respected in all aspects of care and support at this home. The staff have a very good understanding of valuing difference and are able to put this awareness into practice. This has enhanced the experiences and opportunities for young people. Staff ensure the young people have the opportunity to follow their faith. The staff team is culturally diverse and fully represents the young people at the home and the multicultural area where the home is located.

The home has taken action to fully address the requirements and recommendations rising from the previous inspection. They have improved the recording of significant views, discussions and expressed opinions of young people. Young people now regularly complete 'it's time to have your say' questionnaires. All staff have now completed medication training. When they first move to live here all young people now attend an initial psychological assessment with an external agency as part of their placement plan. If further therapeutic support is identified as required, the local authority decide whether to fund the therapeutic referral to the agency undertaking the initial assessment or refer to the children and adolescent mental health service. All employment references are now vetted for their credibility, before staff commence working in the home.

The monitoring of the home is conducted on a regular basis. A person independent of the home visits monthly to check on the home's records. The manager or deputy manager also undertake regular monitoring of the home to fully evaluate the home's development or otherwise against the Statement of Purpose. She signs records, such as the use of sanctions, to ensure compliance with standards and regulations.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.