

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	07/01/2014
Inspector	Stephen Halliley
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Date of last inspection	07/01/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home provides care and accommodation for up to four children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, aged between seven and 17 years and is owned by a registered charity.

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**.

Young people make extremely good progress in all aspects of their lives while living in this home. Most notable are attendance and achievements in education, self-regulation of their behaviours at times of crisis, improved social skills and ability to manage in a range of social situations. Increasing links with the local community are also an area of significant strength.

Young people speak very positively about the staff who work with them and report that they feel very safe living in this home. Relationships with staff are strong and often remain when young people move on from the home highlighting the importance young people attach to these relationships and to how they value the support and guidance they were given.

Highly individualised and regularly updated care plans ensure staff are fully aware of young people's needs and how these can be met. Young people have a range of diverse needs and their own personalities and behaviours. These are accepted by staff and all other young people in a home which has a very clear ethos of openness and honesty between staff and young people.

The Registered Manager has overseen clear progress in many areas of this home since the last inspection and is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the service. Robust management action has been taken in the main to address issues which have arisen in the home and managers are supportive of staff at times of disruption, often working alongside them to support young people through times of crisis.

Shortfalls were noted with regard to the administration of medication and its' recording and the promptness of notifications being made to Ofsted when significant events have occurred. Further minor shortfalls were noted linked to prompt action not being taken following issues being detected during monitoring of the home and verbal verification of references being clearly recorded.

These shortfalls have led to this home being judged to be good at this inspection. Managers are disappointed not to have maintained their previous outstanding judgement but fully understand the reasons behind this. They are committed, passionate and determined to regain this judgement at their next inspection.

Areas for improvement

Statutory 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
21 (2001)	ensure that any medication prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed and a written record is made of all medication administered to any child (Reg 21 (2) (b) (c))	31/01/2014
30 (2001)	ensure that if any of the events listed in column 1 of Schedule 2 takes place, the registered person shall without delay notify the persons indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table. (Reg 30 (1))	31/01/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure that telephone enquiries are made as well as obtaining written references for all new staff (NMS 16.1)
- ensure that the manager regularly monitors, in line with regulations, all records kept by the home to ensure compliance with the homes' policies, to identify any concerns about specific incidents and to identify patterns and trends. Ensure immediate action is taken to address any issues raised by this monitoring. (NMS 21.2)

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **outstanding**.

Young people make huge progress in all areas of their lives while living in this home. The development of emotional resilience and understanding of their situation is supported through sensitive key working sessions and more specific, focused counselling and therapy sessions. This has enabled young people to develop a full understanding of their backgrounds, their place in their family and a sense of their own identity.

Young people's health needs are very well addressed and they have developed a clear understanding of the need to eat healthy, nutritionally balanced diets, the importance of personal hygiene and the benefit of physical activity. Regular appointments with a range of health professionals ensures young people's physical health needs are well addressed at all times. Correct, well planned referrals to, and the ready availability of, a range of counsellors and therapists ensures young people's emotional and psychological needs are also very well supported.

Young people attend school unflinching, a huge improvement on attendance levels from when they arrived in the home. Schools report that young people are 'blossoming' and have a very positive attitude to learning. Young people above school leaving age are currently undertaking apprenticeships. One young person said that they are thoroughly enjoying this experience and 'saving some of my money in the bank but spending some too'. This gives young people a clear understanding of the world of work and supports their developing independence skills through managing a bank account and their own monies.

Within the home young people are involved in a range of household tasks; tidying rooms, laundry, laying/clearing the table, washing up and cooking. They also contribute fully to the day to day running of the home in terms of planning activities and the decoration of their bedrooms. In the wider community young people have been involved in a range of fundraising activities including cake sales and having their art work included in the organisations fund raising calendar. As a result of the extensive equality and diversity work undertaken in the home young people have also developed a very much improved understanding of the needs of other people in their community. This has led to them writing a thank you card to a visually impaired visitor in braille and arranging a sponsored dog walk to raise money for Guide Dogs on which the visitor will be joining them.

All young people benefit from contact with their families. This varies for each young person according to individual plans and any restrictions which may be in place. Contact is fully supported by the home and this ensures young people are able to maintain relationships with those people who are important to them.

Young people are supported to develop life skills from the point they arrive at the home beginning with household chores. As they become more confident and risks to their safety have reduced new skills are added to promote greater independence. This includes independent travel, opening bank accounts, support to find work, budgeting and shopping. These skills are designed to help young people to manage in future placements though support from adults around them may still be required

due to their individual levels of understanding or abilities.

Quality of care

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

Relationships between staff and young people are extremely strong and young people often maintain these relationships after they have moved on demonstrating the importance of these relationships to them. One educational psychologist says 'I feel Rosedale manage children who are very traumatised with great sensitivity and commitment. Sometimes the expectations on them (as an ordinary children's home) exceed what is reasonable to ask. They offer therapeutic re-parenting above and beyond their remit.' Relationships within the young person's group are very stable with all young people readily accepting each other's idiosyncrasies and differences. This allows young people to express themselves without fear and supports the development of emotional maturity and resilience.

Young people are actively involved in weekly house meetings and are clear that staff 'listen to us and respond well to issues and ideas we raise'. This shows young people their views are important to staff and that their input to the running of the home is highly valued. The bedroom of a new resident was decorated with furnishings to complement her chosen colour scheme even before she moved in. This shows new young people at a very early stage how important their views, thoughts and opinions are to the adults who will be working with them and that they will be clearly listened to.

Young people are fully aware of how to make a complaint should they wish to do so. They have ready access to a grumbles and compliments book and each young person also has a formal complaints book. No complaints have been made by young people living in the home reflecting the settled environment, open and honest relationships between staff and young people and that young people are happy and safe in this home.

Young people benefit from staff having highly individualised care and placement plans in place to inform their practice. Young people are actively involved in reviewing internal care plans, risk assessments and behaviour management plans. They also attend and fully participate in their reviews ensuring they are involved in the decision making process which affects their lives. Social workers, school staff and therapists attend staff meetings to discuss specific young people in detail. This ensures excellent cross-remit work, a consistent approach to the care of young people and that any changes to plans can be openly and fully discussed.

Young people's physical and emotional health needs are very well catered for with ready access to a range of health professionals, counsellors and therapists. There are clear procedures in place for the administration of medication to young people and staff receive training in this regard. However, there have been issues since the last inspection with some medication being missed and, on occasion, administered medication not being accurately recorded. Managers have responded robustly to this

through updating policies, strengthening the medication audit system, discussion in team meetings and supervision. All staff are due to refresh this training in February 2014. This response has had an impact as no errors have been noted for several months now.

Young people's education is given a very high priority within this home. All young people attend school or work placements unfailingly. Staff transport young people to and from school on a daily basis and attend all meetings as required to ensure their education is not interrupted. The home also work very closely with education professionals, parents and social workers to ensure that young people attend the school best suited to meet their individual needs, ensuring they are able to learn and achieve to their individual potential.

A range of activities is offered to young people and they have specific activities they take part in on an individual basis. Activities offered include board games, swimming, trips to the seaside and cinema, rock climbing and horse riding.

The quality of care provided to young people on a daily basis is of the highest order and leads, directly, to the extremely positive outcomes achieved by young people. However, issues around the administration of medication result in quality of care being judged to be good.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people are clear that they feel very safe living in this home. They are fully aware that risk assessments and behaviour management plans are in place for each of them and are involved in reviewing these. This approach helps young people begin to identify risk factors around their behaviour and activities in which they participate.

A wide range of health and safety checks, regularly carried out, ensures young people are protected as fully as possible against the risk of accident or injury.

Young people have been reported as missing from the home on three occasions in the year since this home was last inspected. Records of these absences are fully and clearly recorded showing the home has addressed the previous shortfall raised in this area. Staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities should young people go missing in the future. A clear protocol is in place with local police to ensure a joined up, consistent approach designed to facilitate the prompt and safe return of young people to the home.

Behaviour management is a significant strength of this home. There have been only three restraints and four sanctions given since the last inspection and none since July 2013. Low level negative behaviour is addressed in a restorative manner and positive behaviour, very much expected as the norm, is appropriately rewarded. Young

people are responding to this and are clearly self-regulating their behaviours well with rewards outweighing consequences by a ratio of 8:1 since the last inspection.

Young people are well protected from potential harm and abuse by adults who work with them and people who visit the home. Potential new staff are subjected to a range of checks and vetting before they take up employment. This ensures there are no concerns about their suitability to work with young people. However, one new member of staff has not had the verbal checks of her references recorded on her file. Visitors are routinely required to sign in and out and unchecked visitors are chaperoned when young people are in the house.

Allegations of potential harm or abuse are dealt with robustly and promptly. The one incident since the last inspection has been fully documented and was concluded swiftly with appropriate support being given to all parties involved. Staff are fully aware of their role and responsibilities should they be made aware of potential harm or abuse. The registered manager is also fully aware of when external professionals such as Ofsted, safeguarding boards and local authority designated officers need to be made aware of issues. This ensures a complete and well-rounded response to young people and staff should any allegations be forthcoming.

Leadership and management

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

This home is very effectively and efficiently managed. The Registered Manager and her deputy are passionate, committed and dedicated to providing high quality care and this is reflected in the approach and work of the staff team. An educational psychologist comments that 'the management of staff shows a balance of strong leadership and valuing/inclusion of staff skills, opinions and feelings. They are insightful, committed and have a good understanding of attachment and developmental trauma.' This ensures staff are fully involved in the improvements being made by the home and that managers are able to role model good, innovative practice to staff.

The home has shown progress since the last inspection in a number of areas; the two recommendations made at the last inspection have been addressed, diversity work has been greatly expanded, young people are involved in writing and reviewing their risk assessments and team meetings are continually evolving. The statement of purpose and young person's handbook have been recently updated and fully reflect the service offered by the home. The young person's book is also available in alternate formats to ensure it is accessible to all young people.

The quality of care provided by the home is regularly monitored by an external visitor and also the Registered Manager. Reports are detailed and show continual progress. However, items raised in periodical manager's monitoring reports have been repeated showing that the actions requested were not followed through robustly by staff in a timely manner.

The registered Manager is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses of her service. Strengths include the improving and expanding understanding of young people in relation to equality and diversity issues, very strong relationships with a range of partner agencies, the improved feedback received from these groups and the stability of the staff and young person's group. Weaknesses are the lack of time for staff to thoroughly complete paperwork at times of extremely heightened behaviour from young people. This has led directly to the two requirements made as a result of this inspection. There is a clear development plan in place to continue to drive the home forward and a system is in place to allow for additional staffing, as and when necessary.

All staff receive regular supervision and long standing staff have had annual appraisals of their performance. Staff comment that supervision is 'supportive, open, honest and definitely helps me do my job to the best of my ability'. All staff receive training in mandatory areas such as safeguarding, behaviour management, fire safety and first aid. A wide range of additional training is also available including introduction to therapeutic childcare, professional communication, anti-bullying, sexually harmful behaviours, keyworking and support planning and communicating with children. This ensures staff are fully skilled to work with emotionally damaged and very needy young people in a consistent, safe and successful manner.

Young people's files are clearly written and concise giving a clear picture of their time in the home. This would allow young people to fully understand their lives in the home should they wish to look at their files now or in the future.

A number of notifications have been made to Ofsted when significant events have occurred in the home. These records are complete and indicate that all appropriate parties have been informed and kept updated of actions taken. However, one notification included three different incidents of Police involvement on three consecutive days. Additionally a notification relating to potential historical child protection issues was not sent until several days after the initial disclosure when a response had been received from children's services. Neither of these meet the expectation of notifying Ofsted without delay in order that Ofsted, as a regulator, can maintain a clear overview of events taking place in the home.

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.