

## Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC064027        |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 07/11/2012      |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Louise Redfern  |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Full            |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home |

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| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 08/03/2012 |
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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

This is a privately owned children's home which provides care and accommodation for up to five children and young people, who have a learning disability.

### 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 receive highly personalised, well-planned care, taking into account their individual needs. The home strongly promotes positive outcomes for all young people. The manager and staff team are particularly proactive and successful in engaging young people and developing good relationships. As a result, young people make good progress, in relation to their starting points across all aspects of their welfare and development.

Young people state that they are safe in the home; this is supported by the views of parents and professionals. Effective risk assessments and high levels of staff enable young people to engage in a number of purposeful community based activities. The home is managed by an experienced and effective manager, who is committed to improving outcomes for young people and securing improvements to the care provided.

One recommendation and two requirements have been made to secure further improvement in the home.

## 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   |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 17B<br>(2001) | ensure that a written record of any measure of control in a children's home is made in a volume kept for the purpose (Regulation 17B (3))                                                                                                                                         | 07/12/2012 |
| 34<br>(2001)  | ensure that the registered person maintains a system for monitoring matters set out in Schedule 6 at appropriate intervals and ensure the system includes consultation with children accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities. (Regulation 34 (1) (a) (3)) | 07/12/2012 |

## Recommendations

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

- ensure that all staff have their performance individually and formally appraised at least annually and that this appraisal takes into account any views of children the service is providing for. (NMS 19.6)

## Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make exceptional progress in developing a positive self-view regardless of their disability, because the support they receive meets their individual needs. One parent commented, 'It's brilliant at the home, the staff really know my son. He has really come on. Before he came here, I used to struggle taking him out. Now he goes out all the time with staff support.'

Young people benefit from excellent support. The staff team are skilled and knowledgeable at providing individualised care. As a result, young people maintain healthy lifestyles that maximise their quality of life and assist in improving their well-being. Young people's physical, emotional and psychological health is proactively supported. This is because they attend regular appointments with their optician, doctor and specialist dentists that can best meet their individual needs.

Young people make informed choices using their preferred communication style and actively participate in day-to-day decisions, for example, planning their weekly menus. Individual and group activities are stimulating and wide ranging, for example, bowling. This enhances young people's skills, promotes independence, and improves

social relationships. A social worker commented, 'young people are able to take managed risks because of the right level of support, resulting in excellent progress being made.'

Young people have exceptional attendance at educational placements suitable to their individual learning needs. Staff facilitate attendance and liaises consistently with education providers, ensuring that communication is current and robust, and contributions are efficiently made to all care planning arrangements. This means that young people benefit from an integrated approach to sustaining and progressing their education.

Young people are making exceptional progress, in relation to their individual starting points, in developing their independence skills in preparation for adulthood. For example, they choose and make their own suppers. As a result, young people are empowered and encouraged to develop skills for life.

Young people benefit from appropriate contact with their families, friends and significant others. Young people understanding the importance of maintaining contact and developing relationships that are important to them. Staff are proactive in encouraging sustainable relationships by supporting visits and arranging transportation to contacts. This means that young people are not isolated from their families or peer groups. Subsequently, young people experience improved self-confidence.

## **Quality of care**

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

Young people enjoy positive and constructive relationships with staff. This is because staff are consistently concerned with young people's welfare and the high levels of individual support offered to young people. Young people develop, thrive and progress in this service. They make exceptional progress and the relationships between staff and young people are built on care, trust and respect.

Staff fully engage with young people using a varied range of verbal and non-verbal communication methods. This ensures young people's views and wishes are heard and taken into account. Excellent working partnerships with advocacy services mean young people remain central in planning for their futures.

Young people are cared for in line with their individual and personalised care plan. There is an excellent awareness of young people's individual care and support needs. Detailed placement planning means that young people are treated as individuals; their individual needs are recognised and understood by the whole staff team. This enables individualised care planning in which equality and diversity issues are addressed and promoted. Young people benefit from a staff group that have a good understanding and sensitive approach to meeting their individual needs regarding health, disability, ethnicity and family backgrounds.

Staff are extremely proactive in supporting education and young people attend school and achieve their goals. Staff effectively challenge barriers that have a potential to affect young people's educational achievement. For example, staff assist young people in class to offer extra support and maintain education placements. Young people receive encouragement to lead healthy lifestyles. This includes taking an active part in menu and activity planning and attending all health appointments.

Young people know how to make a complaint. The home has a clear and accessible procedure to support this process. There have been no complaints since the last inspection. This is because staff provide a calm and nurturing environment in the home to enable young people to feel safe in raising worries or concerns. One young person commented, 'if I was not happy I would speak to the manager, but I am happy.'

Young people benefit from living in a large house, with personalised bedrooms. The house is currently undergoing a substantial refurbishment. The impending changes will further enhance the environment in which young people live.

### **Safeguarding children and young people**

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

Young people report that they feel safe at the home and can talk to an adult when they are concerned. Staff are well trained in safeguarding young people and the home has extensive policies and procedures in place, which underpin the effective practice. The home has a strong focus on safeguarding young people. For example, individual behaviour management plans clearly identify young people's triggers and behaviours and detail effective intervention strategies. Staff promote the positive behaviour of young people and as a result, no sanctions have been imposed. However, there is a shortfall identified in that there is not a method for recording any imposed sanctions. The manager took steps to rectify this during the inspection and implemented a record of sanctions book.

There are clear safeguarding procedures in place should young people go missing, and staff are clear how to respond. However, due to the nature of young people, and effective staff support, there have been no episodes of young people going missing. The home has detailed risk assessments in place to protect young people without restricting their development. As a result, young people are supported to take reasonable risks as part of their growth and progress, regardless of their disabilities.

All staff are selected and checked through the organisation's robust recruitment procedures. The manager takes an active role in recruitment, ensuring the safe recruitment of staff that are able to meet specific young people's needs. Young people have regular opportunities to participate in fire evacuation drills to ensure they are familiar with the evacuation procedure. This means young people know how to respond in the event of an emergency.

### **Leadership and management**

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

The management team are a well-established, committed and enthusiastic team that are committed to improving outcomes for young people. The staff team are an established team who are balanced in terms of age, gender and experience. The home is well resourced to meet the needs of the young people and high staffing levels are in place on each shift.

The manager has a good approach to identifying young people's individual needs. Effective individual placement plans are established to enable young people to make progress and achieve their full potential. The manager can clearly demonstrate the impact and value that living at the home has had on young people's lives and how their life chances have improved over time. For example, this includes young people having a clear understanding of the transition process into adult provision.

The staff team are well-trained professionals committed to improving the outcomes of young people. Their performance continually improves with well-planned team meetings, effective handovers between shifts and robust and supportive supervisions. The manager effectively challenges any identified shortfalls in staff performance. Systems have not yet been developed to ensure young people's views are obtained about staff as part of their annual appraisal. However, this shortfall does not negatively impact upon young people because their views are routinely heard through daily conversations, observations, key work sessions, young people's meetings and the organisation's regulation 33 visitor.

The manager undertakes regular monitoring of the quality of care. However, monitoring does not currently provide for formal consultations with young people, parents or placing authorities. This shortfall does not negatively impact upon young people because their views, their parents and social workers views are routinely sought as part of regular communication, the review process and the effective admission process.

Records are maintained confidentially and stored correctly and contribute to the understanding of the young person's life. Significant events relating to the protection of young people are promptly notified to the required authorities. This means appropriate action following any incident is taken to keep young people safe.

## 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.