

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Michelle Spruce
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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 provides care and accommodation for up to five children and young people, of either sex, aged from eight years to 17 years, who have a learning disability.

Overall effectiveness

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

This good home provides exceptional outcomes for young people coupled with quality of care. Young people make good progress from their starting point because they remain the focus of the service.

Staff are well trained and provide excellent support to manage the highly personalised placement plans. Young people achieve outstanding outcomes due to staff commitment and motivation. The home continually strives to improve practice. Staff effectively enable young people to use their individual communication system to make their views and wishes known. All aspects concerning young people's health are provided with precision and care and are reflective of each young person's individual needs. Young people feel safe and protected because staff make safeguarding a priority in the home.

There are two shortfalls in practice therefore one action and one recommendation has been raised.

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
32 (2001)	ensure that the registered person shall, after consultation with the fire and rescue authority, take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision for suitable fire equipment, in relation to the fire doors. (Regulation 32(1)(a))	30/11/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure where there has been physical restraint, children are always given the opportunity to be examined by a registered nurse or medical practitioner. (NMS 3.16)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make exceptional progress from their starting point. They develop and thrive in this service and as a result are more confident, helpful and polite. Young people improve their self-esteem and understand their own identity because the staff continually provide opportunities for them to explore and understand who they are. As a result, young people have formed strong relationships with staff and peers.

Young people are positive about their care and their emotional resilience has developed as a result. Young people say they have achieved a lot since first arriving to the home and feel happy to be in full time education. Their attendance is also excellent. This is because of the hard work staff invests into securing suitable placements in education

Young people's health including physical, emotional and psychological is sustained. This is because they attend regular appointments with their optician, dentist and doctor. Young people truly benefit because the staff are skilled and knowledgeable in providing complex care. Young people participate in a range of off-site activities regardless of their disability, culture or religion. Young people have improved personal milestones such as losing weight because of personal fitness programmes. Young people make informed choices using their preferred communication style which means their independence is increased.

Gentle support prepares young people for transition into adulthood. As a result, young people understand how to manage independence and work with staff to continually develop key skills. Young people make a positive contribution to the home and community and are polite and considerate to others around them. They recognise the impact of positive behaviour and act with respect and dignity when out in the community. For example, one staff member from a restaurant commented on the 'excellent manners' used by young people during a recent visit.

Young people benefit from appropriate contact with their family, friends and other people who are important to them. Young people understand the importance of maintaining contact and important relationships are not only maintained but given the opportunity to grow.

Quality of care

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

This home provides an outstanding quality of care because staff place the well-being of young people at the centre of their practice, irrespective of the challenges they present. 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. Young people have excellent courteous manners that reflect the continuity of care and positive role modelling received.

The staff are extremely knowledgeable of the needs of young people and have high aspirations for their future. Staff are extremely proactive and innovative in supporting education and young people attend school and achieve their goals. The staff challenge barriers that have a potential to affect young people's educational achievement.

Staff fully engage with young people despite young people's communication difficulties. The home innovatively consults young people to ensure they fully influence the running of the home. Excellent working partnerships with advocacy services mean young people remain central in planning for their futures. Staff support young people to understand where it is not possible to act upon their wishes. Staff are sensitive to individual needs and deliver explanations at a level tailored to personal need. This is because there is mutual respect, trust and honesty.

Young people know how to complain because staff have a clear and accessible procedure to support the process. There have been no complaints following the previous inspection. This is because staff provide a calm and nurturing environment within the home to enable young people to feel safe in raising worries or concerns.

Staff actively promote diversity and encourage young people to openly express their beliefs and engage in activities that enable young people to feel comfortable about who they are.

The home is located, designed and maintained to a high standard. Young people benefit from a comfortable environment that meets their individual needs. Young people have their own bedroom, which ensures their privacy, and they profit from a spacious garden. Staff provide an environment where young people can express themselves and explore their own diversity, tolerance and equality.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people's safety is a priority. Young people say they feel safe at the home. They have many opportunities to experience and take reasonable risk as part of their growth and development. Young people benefit from clear and well-managed risk assessments that underpin staffs' management and assessment in staying safe.

The home protects young people from the risk of bullying and has clear policy and guidance on what constitutes bullying and how to manage and report it. Young people say they are not bullied in the home. As a result, young people have a strong sense of safety and well-being. Young people's privacy is protected because staff are respectful and always knock before entering their room.

The home is pro-active in ensuring young people remain safe. Due to the nature of young people resident in the home going missing from the home is highly unlikely. However, the home has robust procedures of what to do in the event of any such event. Staff promote the positive behaviour of young people. Staff are skilled and trained in managing behaviour and follow guidance and policy to ensure safe practice. Where restraint is necessary, staff use the minimum period and minimum force possible. However, staff are not offering young people the choice to see a medical practitioner following restraint. This means young people's rights are infringed and potentially compromise their safety.

Investigations into allegations or suspicions of harm are handled in a way that provides effective protection for young people. Staff receive good training to ensure they are equipped to respond to any concern relating to child protection or safeguarding. This means staff know how to respond which promotes the welfare and safety of young people.

Staff working with young people in the home are carefully selected and vetted which ensures they are suitable to work with young people. The home has robust systems in place that maximise the safety of young people and reduce the risk of exposure to unsuitable candidates. Where there are shortfalls in staffing levels the manager and the staff team provide the cover. Thus, continuity of care remains, which keeps young people safe.

The manager ensures that regular monitoring of health and safety takes place to make sure the home is physically safe and secure. All fire and maintenance checks are completed and well documented, staff and young people are well aware of the fire procedure and what action to take in the event of a fire. However, some doors are defective.

Leadership and management

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

This is a good service that provides young people with a high level of care. The home is effectively managed. The manager is supported by a team of care staff and a deputy who are fully committed, motivated and driven to deliver the best possible outcomes for young people. Staff say they all work well as a team and managers are excellent. As a result, the young people receive first-rate quality care. The home continues to sustain improvement and managers communicate high expectations to staff through regular discussion in meetings and supervision. The enthusiasm of the manager cascades down to all staff and influences service delivery. The action raised at the last inspection has been met and all fire drills are now undertaken and clearly

recorded, which ensures safety to all.

Staff and the local authority are all clear about the aims and objectives of the home and what services and facilities it provides. This means the home is effectively meeting the diverse needs of young people. Young people are consulted wherever possible and staff ensure their views and wishes are represented in the running of the home. This means outcomes for young people are exceptional despite their difficulties. Staff show a strong commitment to promoting diversity and equality in the home. Staff have a thorough knowledge of each young person, including their ethnic, religious, social, cultural and economic backgrounds. The home has a staff group who are enthusiastic and who use their experiences, background and skills to develop young people's knowledge.

Staff receive quality training and are supported to access additional resources to enhance personal development. This means young people continually benefit from highly skilled and knowledgeable staff. The home's records are maintained to a high standard, are clear, stored securely, and contribute to the understanding of the young people's life. All significant events relating to the protection of children accommodated in the home are notified to the appropriate authorities and appropriate action is taken following the incident. However, there have been no notifications since the previous inspection.

There are clear development plans in place that indicate the home's strengths and weaknesses. The manager actively updates the plan at regular intervals to ensure it is effective in addressing areas for improvement. The home is currently waiting for planning permission to improve the quality of the home, by undertaking a complete refurbishment.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.