

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

The home is part of the provision operated by the local authority. The home provides care for up to two young people aged between 12 and 17-years-old who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Overall effectiveness

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

This is an outstanding home that provides exceptional outcomes for young people coupled with quality of care. Young people are safe and feel safe. Staff are very well trained and provide excellent support to manage the highly personalised placement plans. Young people achieve outstanding outcomes due to staff dedication and motivation. The home delivers exceptional quality where communication is concerned and young people's views are truly valued and acted upon. All aspects concerning young people's health is provided with precision and care and is reflective of each young person's individual needs.

The home provides a welcoming, nurturing place to live where young people thrive and achieve success. The key strengths of the service are the staff. Their effectiveness derives from passion, respect and kind regard that threads through into practice. Young people fully appreciate the quality of care which is reflected through the strong bonds in relationships.

The home continually strives to improve practice and fully incorporates the views and wishes of young people.

There is one shortfall in practice therefore an action has been raised.

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
20 (2001)	ensure at all times, at least one person on duty at the children's home has a suitable first aid qualification. Regulation (20)(2)(e)	31/10/2011

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make exceptional progress from their starting point on admission to the home. Staff make tremendous effort to maximise the full potential of young people. As a result outcomes are significantly improved. The relationships between young people and staff are strong and positive. Young people are confident and regard themselves as valuable individuals; this results in mutual respect for themselves and each other.

Young people achieve significant goals where their education is concerned. The improvements in attendance and achievement is testimony that hard work, self belief and commitment pay off. Staff are highly motivated and enthusiastic in providing young people with the skills and knowledge they require to achieve success in their lives. Young people benefit from a forward thinking team who ensure that their needs and wishes are top priority. As a result successful outcomes for young people are achieved.

The staff are innovative and young people gain valuable skills from their dynamic leadership. This is demonstrated by the hard work and support young people receive in planning for the future. Young people have aspirations regarding where they wish to live and how they will achieve their goals. Young people continue to mature and grow in readiness for independence. This is achieved without fear or favour in regards to faith, gender, religion, ethnicity or culture. Young people embrace difference and staff support them to manage change maturely and respectfully without discrimination against others.

Young people's behaviours are improved as a result of the consistent approach of the staff team. One social worker commented, 'since moving there has been no risk taking behaviour at all.' This is also a result of substantial input into the intricate care planning. Staff provide a nurturing homely environment which is coupled with robust behaviour management plans. This means that consistent boundaries have directly impacted on the positive outcomes and improved behaviour.

Young people maintain relationships with those who are important and significant to them because of the committed and dedicated approach staff provide to support contact. This means important bonds develop in strength and grow over time.

Quality of care

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

Staff clearly have high aspirations for young people and hold them in high regard.

Young people benefit from a competent and skilled staff team who unmistakably put them at the forefront of everything they do. The home is proactive in promoting educational attainment while recognising and celebrating achievement. Where the home has faced difficulties and barriers the staff have found innovative ways to successfully achieve particular goals that are vitally important to young people. For example, staff supported a young person to attend a case planning meeting to express their wishes. As a result the young person felt listened to and valued.

The positive relationships young people build is a reflection of the quality of care they receive. Staff provide consistent support and act as positive role models that help mould young people into respectful adults. The staff say about the relationships, 'the relationships are open and honest, staff take a valid interest in the welfare of young people.' The quality of care is child focused and as a result young people continue to receive care to a high standard.

Staff are exceptionally knowledgeable about the young people in their care. The young people's views, wishes and feelings are sought in many ways. This empowers young people to openly express and discuss important issues that are meaningful to them. Young people receive a good quality care in line with their placement plan that incorporates their physical, emotional and psychological needs. This is encompassed with a safe and nurturing environment that provides security and stability in which young people thrive. Staff act sensitively and with empathy where it is not possible to act on the wishes in some cases. As a result young people feel involved and truly valued.

The home has a clear process to raise complaints. Young people receive a guide on admission that outlines the procedure to raise concerns. Staff ensure that minor grumbles are dealt with at an informal stage and as a result of training staff receive young people remain happy and settled. However, the home has received minor complaints from the community which were dealt with appropriately and in a timely manner.

Staff embrace equality and diversity in their everyday care practice. The care files demonstrate there is a fair and equal approach to service delivery to young people despite race, gender, religious belief or disability. The young people approach difference in a fair and respectful manner which is courteous and polite to others. This means the home manages equality and diversity well.

Young people live in a home that is suitably located, appropriately designed and maintained. Staff encourage young people to take responsibility for the up keep and design of the home and how they wish it to present. As a result young people feel proud about the environment in which they live.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people say they feel safe and secure in an environment which provides appropriate safety and reduces risk of harm or neglect. Staff feel the safety of young people is paramount and as a result they strive to ensure that risk of potential harm or abuse is minimised. There are clear and detailed risk assessments that safeguard young people without removing the everyday risk taking needed to naturally develop. As a result young people achieve a sense of safety and well-being even at their most vulnerable.

Staff are exceptional at managing and promoting positive behaviour. As a result of finely tuned behaviour management plans and positive reward measures young people develop a strong sense of how to behave appropriately. As a result offending behaviour has significantly reduced and staff do not use physical intervention as a measure of control. This means young people develop socially acceptable behaviour and know how to manage and acknowledge their own emotions and feelings appropriately. The home ensures that all young people are protected from any form of bullying. Young people say they are not subject to any form of bullying in the home and are aware of how to raise concerns through the complaints procedure should they need to.

The staff are knowledgeable and skilled in the management of addressing incidents where young people go missing. Young people tend not to go missing; however on occasion there are incidents of unauthorised absence. The staff are vigilant in recording and monitoring and follow the strict guidance and risk assessment to ensure the safety of the individual at all times.

Young people are protected because the manager ensures that the home is safe and secure. All health and safety monitoring is regularly addressed reducing the risk of potential hazards. Staff and young people take part in fire evacuation drills this ensures their safety in the event of an emergency. The home provides suitable vetting of new staff to ensure all safety checks are clear as part of the recruitment procedure before beginning employment. This reduces the risk of unsuitable candidates causing potential harm to young people.

Leadership and management

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

Young people benefit from living in a home that is managed by a committed and highly valued team lead by a motivated and dedicated manager. There are staffing structures in place that provide adequate support in caring for young people. The staff team are supervised regularly and benefit from a good training package that is tailored to support their individual development. This means staff continue to provide good quality care. Although staff training is good, some staff do not have an up-to-date first aid certificate.

There is a real sense of leadership in the home and young people feel empowered to confide in all staff including the manager. The manager is proactive and cascades

information to the team clearly and objectively. This ensures staff fully understand the homes aims and objectives. As a result staff feel involved and part of the bigger picture of service delivery.

The manager is confident in the plans for the future and development plans are in place. The monitoring of the home is managed by routine regulation 33 and 34 visits. Young people benefit from consultation during the visits to ensure they are being cared for in line with the National Minimum Standards and Children's Homes Regulations. Staff are consulted through regular meetings and supervisions where input and feed back is given and received. This ensures the home continues to improve. All records in the home are appropriately stored and located in a locked office to maintain confidentiality.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.