

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC066912
Inspection date	13/10/2011
Inspector	Pete Hylton
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	23/02/2011
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2011

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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 privately owned home provides accommodation for up to two young people. The home caters for young people who may display emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Overall effectiveness

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

This is an outstanding home and young people make exceptional progress. A dedicated, committed and well trained staff team deliver high standards of care. Young people are encouraged and fully supported in a range of activities.

The home is well designed and meets the individual needs of young people. There is a commitment to continual improvement and this is modelled by the staff team. The manager has a robust and systematic approach to planning and closely monitors progress. Young people are actively involved in all aspects of the home. For example, a recent new kitchen was chosen by young people. While the home is largely well decorated, some areas are not as well maintained as they could be and the garden is untidy in places.

Young people's views are continually sought and acted upon. They benefit from a culture of openness and complaints are fully supported. While young people are made aware of a wide range of support services, they are unable to make calls in private or without asking staff first.

Young people benefit from a staff team that works closely with the organisation's therapists. This ensures that care plans are highly personalised and care is tailored to meet the needs of the individual. Educational attainment and achievement are fully encouraged, recognised and rewarded. Creative and innovative strategies ensure that progress is exceptional.

Young people are supported in all areas of their lives and are fully involved in planning their own care. Independence is highly promoted and young people are encouraged to take responsibilities in line with their age and understanding, for example, the planning and purchasing of meals. Young people clearly enjoy living at the home and a young person commented, 'it's really good and I like it here.'

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
15 (2001)	ensure that children accommodated in the home are provided access to at all reasonable times and without reference to persons working in the home a telephone on which to make and receive calls in private (Regulation 15.4 (a))	02/12/2011
31 (2001)	ensure that all parts of the children's home used by children are kept clean and reasonably decorated and maintained. (Regulation 31.2 (e))	02/12/2011

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make exceptional progress at the home. The range of activities available to young people is impressive and reflects individual need. Close support by staff has ensured that improvements in young people's behaviour have been exceptional. A social worker commented that a young person has made, 'absolutely remarkable progress.'

Life story work is high quality and is jointly planned with the organisation's therapists. This ensures that young people develop a secure knowledge of their individual backgrounds. Young people have a strong sense of individuality and are fully encouraged to maintain family relationships where appropriate to do so.

Young people make exceptional progress in education. Excellent communication between home and school ensures that young people are fully supported at all times. Staff work closely with young people during education and fully promote attendance. Young people are supported in reflecting on their time at school and this in turn leads to improved outcomes. Young people are encouraged to explore their career ideas through activities provided by the home. This in turn supports young people with developing appropriate yet challenging aspirations.

Young people make excellent progress in terms of their health. For example, the provision of gym equipment in the home enables young people to take responsibility for their own fitness. Furthermore, young people are fully encouraged to eat healthily and their dietary intake is closely monitored. This, and other examples, clearly demonstrate that the young people are able to engage in healthy lifestyles.

Young people are well prepared for adulthood. Staff encourage them to develop independence skills and progress is very good. A young person commented that I now, 'respect myself and help myself more.' Young people make successful transitions to adulthood when leaving the home and a young person commented that, 'being here has helped me loads.'

Quality of care

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

Young people benefit from a caring staff team who work hard to provide a warm, homely and relaxing environment. The house is generally well decorated and equipped, although some areas of the home are not as well maintained as they could be. For example, the bathroom has several tiles missing and the floor is stained. Similarly the utility room has areas that are not well maintained and the ceiling in the dining room is peeling.

The outside of the property is spacious and the outbuilding houses fitness equipment. Young people regularly use this as part of keeping a healthy lifestyle. The outside area of the home is untidy in places with weeds and some overgrown shrubs and hedges. Some recent redecoration has taken place and the improvements to some areas has obviously made a huge impact. For example, young people were actively involved in choosing the new kitchen,. There is a genuine feeling in the home that young people are listened to and that they are involved. An excellent example is the young people's guide. This was designed and written by young people and is used throughout the organisation.

Young people have clear guidance about how to complain. There is a dedicated complaints officer in the organisation. External agencies are actively promoted and their numbers are readily available. Young people are able to access a range of support services and are encouraged to do so. Complaints by young people are taken very seriously and swiftly acted upon. This ensures that young people feel listened to and their views are respected. However, young people cannot access the phone without asking staff. This means that they are unable to make calls in private although they do not express this as being a problem.

Care planning is highly personalised and young people benefit from close support by staff. There is an innovative daily system being used which monitors young people's progress against individual targets. This information is shared with young people so progress can be tracked and care plans updated where necessary. Individual needs are fully considered when care planning. Consultation with young people ensures that they are fully involved in their own care planning. The use of rewards and recognition of all positive behaviour means that young people are encouraged to achieve and succeed. A member of staff commented that the, 'consequences book and rewards are brilliant.'

There is excellent attention to meeting needs. For example, the use of coloured paper for young people who may be Dyslexic. Excellent relationships between school, the social worker and the home means that there is a feeling of continual care. Young people are encouraged to attend all review meetings and their views are central to the planning of care.

Healthy eating and healthy lifestyles are actively promoted. Young people are encouraged to plan their own meals. Staff support young people in shopping for the

home. This helps young people to develop independence skills and all meals provided are balanced, nutritious and healthy. Of particular note is the active lifestyles of young people. Staff fully encourage outdoor pursuits and the enthusiasm of staff in these activities provides positive role modelling. Young people are actively involved in maintaining the garden and staff have helped them to develop a vegetable patch.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people are safe at this home Young people rarely go missing and when they do, the staff response is swift, safe and efficient. Excellent relationships with the local police ensure that young people are kept safe. Communication between home, school and other professionals is of a high standard, appropriate and regular. This ensures that the needs of young people are identified and any concerns acted upon.

Excellent positive behaviour strategies ensure incidents of restraint are extremely rare. There is a creative approach from the staff and young people are able to state what they wish to work towards. All positive behaviour is recorded and rewarded. Young people benefit from clear boundaries and are able to work towards specific goals. Excellent communication between home and school ensures that reward programmes are consistently applied. This in turn, has led to massive reductions in challenging behaviour of young people since they have lived in the home.

Complaints from young people are dealt with appropriately and positive outcomes secured. Young people have a range of support services available to them and these are well publicised in the home. Staff are well trained in child protection procedures and offer young people the right to complain as standard. The manager ensures that the staff team are creative in gaining the views of young people. For example, young people are encouraged to air their views on outdoor activities away from the home. These views are then recorded and agreed with the young person as part of regular key working sessions.

The management of risk is exceptional. Young people benefit from a staff team who risk assess all activities. This ensures that full participation and safety is promoted at all times. Excellent examples include the wide range of activities available to young people. These range from dog walking to swimming to camping. Young people are fully encouraged to take managed risks in line with their abilities.

Leadership and management

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

Young people benefit from a well trained, energetic and highly committed staff team. Training is high quality and all staff are regularly supervised. The manager is ambitious and passionate about the home and this is reflected in the staff team. Diversity amongst the staff group is an identified area of development. The manager

has plans in place to address this and other areas of self-identified weakness such as staff communication and improvements to the physical environment.

The home's development plan clearly states the improvements needed. This is closely monitored by the manager and progress is regularly and rigorously checked. This means that young people benefit from an ethos of continual improvement.

Staffing rotas are planned in advance and a stable staff team provides high standards of care. The training needs of staff are rigorously monitored. This ensures that young people are cared for by a motivated and enthusiastic staff team. Staff are well trained, qualified and appropriately experienced. The vetting procedures are extremely robust and the use of various scenario based tests at interview ensures that staff are suitable. The staff team is closely matched to the needs of the young people.

Regular monitoring visits ensure that the home is run in accordance with its Statement of Purpose. Furthermore, the use of a newly introduced computer program has revolutionised the monitoring of budgets, safety and training. Regular team meetings ensure that information is passed to the staff team. The manager has high expectations for young people and staff.

Equality and diversity practice is **outstanding**.