

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	David Kidner
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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 is registered to provide care and support to six children of the same sex with emotional behavioural difficulties and learning difficulties.

Overall effectiveness

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

The home is well managed and there are positive outcomes for young people. Young people are supported by a service that is focused on their individual needs and ensures that individualised care and support is provided. A strength of this service is the promotion of independent living skills and young people being encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour, in a way that is appropriate to their age.

Young people have positive views about the quality of care and state that they feel safe at the home. Another feature of the service includes the desire to promote young people's confidence, safety and well-being. Young people state that they feel safe at the home and enjoy the activities that are provided.

Young people make good progress in relation to their starting points across all aspects of their welfare and development. There is good communication between home, school and college. This promotes continuity and consistency in supporting young people with their education. Ofsted has received positive comments from a placing authority in relation to the care and support provided at the home.

Areas for improvement include matters relating to the home's Statement of Purpose and children's guide, records relating to medicines and the use of restraint and in further promoting a homely environment.

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 the registered person shall make suitable arrangements for the recording and safe administration of any medicines received into the children's home (Regulation 21 (1))	16/11/2011
17B	ensure that the written volume kept for the purpose of	16/11/2011

(2001)	recording the use of restraint contains all the required documentation (Regulation 17B (3))	
4 (2001)	ensure that the children's guide has the address and telephone number of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (Regulation 4 (3) (c))	07/12/2011
4 (2001)	ensure that the home's Statement of Purpose consists of a statement as to matters listed in Schedule 1 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2001. (Regulation 4 (1))	07/12/2011

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home further promotes a comfortable and homely environment, in particular to give consideration to improving the environment on the first floor and some young people's en-suite facilities (NMS 10.3)
- ensure that physical restrictions in the normal movement around the home are only used where agreed with the responsible authority and, if appropriate with parents (NMS 10.4)
- ensure that where any sanctions are used children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records kept by the home (NMS 3.18)
- ensure that the children's guide contains the contact details of their Independent Reviewing Officer and the Children's Rights Director (NMS 13.5)
- ensure that Regulation 34 reports contain all the required elements when monitoring the quality of care provided in the home. (NMS 21.1)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make good progress in developing a positive self view and knowledge and understanding of their background. The home ensures that young people are provided with good opportunities to be involved in the local and wider community, and to make informed choices. Young people are delighted with the support and enthusiasm that the staff team provide in promoting their hobbies and interests. The home provides young people with a wide range of leisure opportunities both within the home and in the wider community.

The service fully promotes the educational needs of the young people and provides good support for all young people to attend school and college. Young people have positive views in relation to their education and are supported and encouraged by the staff team to undertake learning and to complete their homework.

Some young people have specific health care needs and the service has developed good health care plans that clearly identify their needs. This ensures that young

people are supported and encouraged to develop an understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Young people benefit from appropriate contact with their family, friends and other people who are important to them.

Quality of care

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

The home is located in a semi-rural setting but within easy access to local social, leisure and recreational activities. Young people benefit from good indoor recreation facilities that the home provides, such as a games room that houses a pool table, darts and television. Young people are pleased to point out the large garden, fruit trees and the vegetable plot which they enjoy. There are other areas of the home where young people can enjoy quiet time and leisure opportunities. The home promotes a homely environment and is decorated and maintained to a good standard. However, some areas of the home including the first floor and some bathing facilities require maintenance and redecoration in order to further promote this. Young people's bedrooms reflect their individual likes, needs and preferences. Young people's privacy is promoted as all bedroom doors have safety locks fitted and all have en-suite facilities. Young people confirmed that their privacy and dignity are promoted. However, the home has not detailed the use of electronic monitoring in each young person's placement plan that may restrict normal movement within the home.

The home actively promotes the education of young people and the care team provide encouragement and individual support to attend school and college. Young people are making good progress. Placement plans clearly identify the support that young people require in relation to their educational needs and all young people have personal education plans. There are good links between the home, placing authorities and education facilities. This ensures good communication between all services, and promotes continuity and consistency. Young people are supported with their homework as required and staff are proactive in providing encouragement and guidance.

Young people are supported and encouraged to engage in purposeful and enjoyable social and leisure activities. Young people state that they love the activities that are provided at the home and young people benefit from being able to partake in their favourite pastimes. All young people have benefited from a camping holiday which they thoroughly enjoyed.

There are robust procedures for assessing and introducing young people to the home. This ensures that wherever possible a smooth transition to the home is promoted and young people settle in quickly. Young people enjoy good relationships with staff and staff are very aware of their very individual needs. Placement plans are comprehensive and clearly identify each young person's individual care needs. They are supported by detailed individual risk assessment and both documents are

regularly reviewed in order to reflect any changes in care and support. Wherever possible young people sign their agreement of their plan of care and support. This demonstrates the home's willingness to involve young people in the planning of their care.

Young people state that they are aware of how to make a complaint and the home's complaints log records that some young people have made a complaint. The records evidence that these have been addressed and satisfactorily resolved.

The home provides a healthy environment where young people are able to access the services and support they need to meet their physical, emotional and psychological needs. The home develops detailed health care plans that are regularly reviewed. Young people's medicines are kept safe and secure and all staff receive training in the administrations of medicines. However, it was noted that the recording and administration records of some medicines are not clear and concise. The Registered Manager took action at the time of the inspection to address this.

Young people enjoy meals that are varied and meet their dietary needs, likes and dislikes. Menus demonstrate the promotion of meals from other countries. Young people are fully involved in the budgeting, shopping and cooking of their own meals, based on individual needs. Young people are enthusiastic in this area and show pride and satisfaction in the skills they have developed.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people's placement plans clearly identify risk and protective factors for individual young people. Risk assessments are comprehensive and are regularly reviewed and individual guidelines and strategies are developed that give clear guidance on how to meet each young person's needs.

The home's missing person's policy is robust and is compatible with and has regard to the Runaway and Missing from Home and Care protocols and procedures, maintained and managed by the police. The Registered Manager has devised individual guidelines for all young people at the home. However, documentary evidence and discussions with the Registered Manager confirm that it is very rare that young people leave the home without permission, or become missing.

The home has good systems in place to ensure that young people's welfare is protected and promoted. Staff training records confirm that all care staff receive safeguarding training. Discussions with care staff confirmed that they have a clear understanding of safeguarding protocols and procedures. However, the Registered Manager confirmed that the frequency of this training is to be reviewed to consider more frequent refresher training. Investigations into allegations or suspicions of harm are handled fairly, quickly and consistently in a way that provides effective protection for young people. Young people state that bullying is not an issue at the home and that any incidences of suspected bullying are addressed immediately. All young

people state that they feel safe.

There is a culture in the home that young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour, in a way that is appropriate to their age. The home has an effective rewards system to encourage positive behaviour and all young people state that the rules are fair. Care staff receive training in the use of de-escalation and restraint. Restraint and sanctions are closely monitored by the Registered Manager and responsible individual, and by further internal monitoring. Care staff complete very comprehensive incident reporting forms that clearly detail the use of restraint. Young people are given the opportunity to have their views recorded following the use of restraint and confirm that they have not been hurt following its use. However, the home's volume kept for the purpose of recording the use of restraint does not contain all the required elements. Sanctions are imposed and closely monitored but the home's record does not demonstrate that young people's views are always recorded.

The service has a robust process for the recruitment of care staff. All care staff working at the home have an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check before commencing work in the home and visitors are closely monitored.

The home is physically safe and takes into account the needs of the young people. The service ensures that environmental risk assessments, activity risk assessments and fire safety checks are undertaken to promote safety and well-being. The home has conducted appropriate checks of the home's utility services.

Leadership and management

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

The service's Statement of Purpose does not contain all of the required items as listed in Schedule 1 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2011. This does not ensure that it provides concise and full information as to the service it provides. The Registered Manager acknowledged this and commenced action to rectify this. Young people confirm that they have received the children's guide and found it helpful. The guide is user friendly but does not contain the contact details of their Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), the Children's Rights Director (CRD) or the address and telephone number of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector. However, contact details of the IRO and CRD are posted around the home.

Care staff receive regular supervision and an annual appraisal as required. The service ensures that staff receive the appropriate training to perform their role and staff have received training in safeguarding, de-escalation and restraint, first aid, food hygiene, care value base and care law, harmful behaviours, stress management, medication and health and safety. The home has a training and development plan that demonstrates commitment in ensuring that all staff achieve a National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. Currently 60% of the care team have been awarded this qualification. Newly appointed staff are to undertake the level 3 Children and Young People's Workforce

Diploma.

The home ensures that there are appropriate numbers of staff on duty at all times to reflect the current needs of the young people. Rotas have time scheduled to ensure handovers are held, and young people are aware of staff members who are sleeping in.

The home is well managed. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed. Care staff speak very well of the support, guidance and advice that they receive from the Registered Manager. The Registered Manager confirmed that further awareness is needed on their behalf, and in further raising the team's awareness of the recent changes in legislation and practice developments.

The Registered Manager monitors the quality of care provided at the home by conducting regular audits. However, there is a minor shortfall in the monitoring of all the matters as listed in Schedule 6 of the Children's Homes Regulation 2001. The service ensures that monthly Regulation 33 visits are conducted and detailed reports are sent to Ofsted. The service undertakes further internal monitoring and has implemented a development plan for the home. This plan is detailed and will inform good practice, and the development of the service.

Equality and diversity practice is **satisfactory**.