

## Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC069474      |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 29/11/2011    |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Gaynor Moorey |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Full          |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       |               |

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| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 17/01/2011 |
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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 provides care for up to two young people who have experienced emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is privately owned.

### Overall effectiveness

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

Young people benefit from living at this home. High levels of staff commitment and an ethos of valuing young people's opinions makes them feel that they are being cared for to a good standard. Young people are supported to feel safe within the home; this is underpinned by efficient systems to protect and promote welfare. Young people are given the skills to become independent and to look to the future. Young people have good opportunities to participate in community activities and socialise with peers from outside of the home. Young people are given good support to enable them to enjoy and get the best from educational placements. Care planning effectively focuses on young people's individuality. They benefit from support particularly in regards to their emotional well-being.

### Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people benefit from individualised support which helps them develop their life skills, education and self-confidence. Carefully planned support from key workers and consistent care provided by the staff team helps the young people to achieve set goals and targets and to develop their self-esteem. The staff team are aware of each young person's preferences with regards to activities and interests and offer support for the young people to achieve these.

Young people benefit from very well planned health care services which includes access to psychological and psychiatric assistance if they need it. The young people particularly benefit from having their emotional health and well-being promoted to an excellent standard by the staff team. They are also offered routine medical appointments to opticians, dentists and doctors. Any specific needs are identified in their care plans and the system to administer medication robustly ensures that the young people receive medication when they need it. Healthy living is encouraged by offering a balanced and healthy diet and by encouraging exercise. Specific advice with regards to issues such as sexual health and drug awareness is also available to the young people.

Young people receive consistent support to develop their independent living skills. Individual programmes are put in place which encourages the young people to

develop their living skills at a pace they can handle and at a level commensurate with their maturity and understanding. They are involved in cooking their own meals and on occasion help members of staff to cook meals for the whole group. Targets are set for the young people to achieve which are related to developing their life skills. The young people are fully aware of what they need to do in order to progress.

Young people's views are valued and encouraged by the staff team. Numerous opportunities, including key work sessions, house meetings and informal discussions are available to the young people. These forums enable them to speak about how they feel they are being cared for. Young people are able to influence decisions about menus, activities, target setting and their care plans.

Education is promoted to a good standard. Both young people have educational placements and the staff work extremely hard to promote attendance. One young person has a educational placement and attends on a regular basis. The other young person is currently missing from the home. Members of staff liaise with key teachers at the education settings to ensure all professionals are aware of any specific issues. This ensures that the young people receive the care and support they need when they are at their educational setting.

Young people benefit from carefully and sensitively delivered support. Staff commitment is excellent and great effort is made to give every opportunity for the young people to make the right decisions and to have opportunities to develop their life chances.

### **Quality of care**

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

Young people benefit from positive relationships with members of staff. It is clear that the members of staff know the young people very well and are very aware of their vulnerabilities as well as strengths. The staff approach ensures that young people are confident that members of staff will advocate for them and support them with any difficulties. The approach used by the staff team ensures that young people are cared for in a supportive environment.

Young people's comprehensive care plans clearly identify their individual needs. Good monitoring enables staff to evaluate young people's progress and to ensure that care plans are up to date and outline the needs of each young person. This process in turn positively contributes to statutory reviews and means that reports and staff input accurately reflects each young person's progress and areas of concern.

Staff routinely consult with young people. There is a culture of promoting young people's rights and encouraging them to voice their feelings and opinions appropriately. Young people are able to influence decisions relating to their daily lives, such as menus and activity planning. Young people benefit from having routines and guidelines which can encourage them to make the right decisions.

Healthy lifestyles are encouraged by the staff guiding young people in choosing healthy menus and by encouraging them to partake in physical exercise and activities. Staff awareness of each young person's background and vulnerabilities ensures that the young people's emotional well-being is promoted to a particularly outstanding standard.

The home provides a spacious and comfortable environment which is maintained to a good standard. Young people are encouraged to personalise their rooms and to keep their rooms and the house clean and tidy.

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

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

Young people are supported to feel safe living in the home. There are comprehensive systems which are understood by members of staff, relating to reporting any issues of note or concern to the relevant agencies. All members of staff have attended training in child protection and know what to do and who to inform if they have concerns about a young person's well-being. Records indicate that this is achieved effectively and promptly; the manager robustly checks and monitors any records in relation to safeguarding issues.

The home has a clear process in place for each young person in the event that they are missing. This includes individual risk assessments which outline their particular vulnerabilities. The staff work very hard to support young people when they are missing and to search for them and keep in contact to encourage a return to the home. Records and conversations with local police officers show that the home reports young people as missing if this is required. The young people are aware of their individual protocols, such as timescales if they go missing.

There is a clear complaints process in place which is readily available and used by the young people. They are aware of the system and know the various adults and organisations to whom they can complain. The manager addresses complaints promptly and ensures that the young people are happy about and understand the resolution to any complaints they have made. Neighbourhood concerns and complaints are responded to quickly and efficiently.

Staff manage rare incidents of bullying. Young people are encouraged to speak out about any issues and incidents they are having including those happening with other young people at the home.

Staff actively encourage and promote positive behaviour. Young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and how to develop strategies to deal with challenging situations. Occasionally staff have to sanction young people. Records of sanctions are checked and endorsed by senior members of staff to ensure that they are appropriate. Young people report that sanctions imposed are fair and they are given an opportunity to sign and comment upon the record. All members of staff are trained in the method of restraint used in the home.

All members of staff are subject to a rigorous recruitment process which ensures that all necessary checks have been carried out before they work in the home. This ensures that only adults with an appropriate employment history are employed to work with the young people.

The home has a robust risk management system. Risk assessments address the general building and fire safety. Young people's individual guidelines highlight behavioural management issues and other risk factors such as self harm. Fire equipment is regularly checked generally young people are aware of what to do in the event of a fire.

### **Leadership and management**

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

A comprehensive Statement of Purpose is available at the home. A children's guide is produced in a appropriate format. The Statement of Purpose is available to social workers, parents and carers. The home operates in line with its stated objectives and is efficiently and effectively managed.

Young people are provided with consistent and high standards of care from a committed, competent and well-trained staff team. Sufficient staff ensure that both group and individual needs are met. Members of staff undertake regular training which provides them with skills, knowledge and competencies required to meet the needs of the young people. Members of staff receive regular supervision, informal supervision and yearly appraisals. Team meetings provide an opportunity for staff to discuss practice and keep up to date with any issues related to the care of the young people.

The manager makes efficient use of established internal and external systems to monitor and improve on the quality of care and to ensure compliance with regulations and national minimum standards. The manager has a good understanding of the home's strengths and takes positives steps to address and rectify any weaknesses. The home received five recommendations at the last inspection which referred to liaising with schools to support educational attainment, ensuring all staff are aware of the safeguarding procedures, recording the effectiveness of sanctions and two others related to health and safety including ensuring times are recorded of evacuations and the electrical installation are checked every three years. All of these have been addressed and met.

Members of staff report that the manager is approachable and will listen to comments and observations. The systems and management of the home ensures that the care of the young people is scrutinised and that practice seeks to improve their life chances and opportunities to enrich their experience of living in the home.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.

