

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC356318
Inspection date	04/12/2012
Inspector	Amanda Ellis
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	19/03/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is registered to provide care for two young people, of either sex with emotional, behavioural and learning difficulties. It is owned by a private company.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: a service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

Good: a service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements

Adequate: a service that only meets minimum requirements

Inadequate: a service that does not meet minimum requirements

Overall effectiveness

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

Young people make good progress from their time of admission to this home. They receive individualised care and support which encourages them to fulfil their potential educationally, socially and personally.

Care planning and practice address the unique and diverse needs of young people. All aspects of young people's welfare and development are progressed with the involvement of a range of educational, therapeutic and social care professionals.

Safeguarding practices are robust with good quality support from a knowledgeable staff and management team. Where young people engage in risk-taking or offending behaviours, staff collaborate with a range of professionals to minimise risk. The well-being of individual young people is at the centre of their practice, irrespective of the challenges they present.

The management arrangements of this home are outstanding in delivering effective leadership. Similarly, the quality of care is exceptional. A highly professional staff team demonstrates a commitment to continual improvement and deliver high standards of care to all young people.

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people are encouraged to understand their backgrounds and current circumstances. They learn to develop trusting relationships with staff and significant

others. Young people progress to develop a more positive self-view and improved emotional resilience. Outcomes for young people improve because they receive stability of care delivered by a skilled staff team.

All young people are encouraged and supported to regularly attend school or other educational provision. Some young people are beyond compulsory school age and are initially resistant to engage in formal training or education. However, as a result of the persistence of staff and the consistency provided by the structure and routine of the home, young people engage with work, training or other educational opportunities. This means that the young people are able to fully explore their potential. Young people's educational achievement is good, taking into account their starting points at the time of the placement.

Young people benefit from improved health and staff actively encourage them to lead a healthy lifestyle. Although some young people are difficult to engage in their healthcare, they benefit from the consistent advice, guidance and support given by staff. This means they gain an understanding of key health risks and take responsibility for their own health. Outcomes for young people's future health improve as most access the regular health care on offer.

Young people benefit from appropriate contact with families and significant people. The staff team collaborate with professionals and families and promote positive contact in line with the arrangements agreed in individual care plans.

Young people do occasionally engage in risk-taking and offending behaviours. They benefit from the support given by the staff and other agencies which reduces incidents and minimises further risk. Staff work effectively with the young people to avoid criminalisation and support them to develop more productive behaviours. Young people have improved life chances as a result of living at this home.

Young people benefit from an effective independence training programme through which they develop confidence, practical experience and knowledge. Young people learn independence skills which improve their chances of making a successful transition to independent living. The staff team support and monitor the effectiveness of this learning.

Quality of care

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

Young people receive an outstanding quality of care at the home. A social worker commented, 'The quality of care is exceptional! All needs are met in a sensitive and proper manner. There is a good gender, age and cultural mix in the staff group. This has helped with socialisation and in developing skills in this culture. He lives in a 'learning environment' - they have done a remarkable job.'

The dedicated staff team place the well-being of young people at the centre of their practice. Young people benefit from care which is responsive and resilient to

challenging behaviours and which encourages and celebrates the achievements of young people.

Young people receive a children's guide which contains information on their care, advocacy, contacts and the details for Ofsted. These guides are in a variety of languages to meet the cultural and language needs of the young people. Young people know how to make a complaint to staff. The complaints procedure is on the notice-board in appropriate formats. Young have access to their own telephone to make private calls. This means young people can access appropriate agencies, to express any concerns they may have, independently of the staff team.

The management and staff team demonstrate an impressive commitment to promoting issues of equality and diversity. Staff have completed training in relation to equality and diversity. They demonstrate a thorough and sensitive understanding of the cultural and personal identity needs of each young person. As a result, young people can expect staff to be able to identify and meet their diverse needs.

Care planning, risk assessments and behaviour management plans are clear, comprehensive and reflect the individuality and diversity of young people. Young people receive consistent and effective care due to the consistent and effective application of the strategies outlined within plans.

Young people benefit from a staff team who maintain excellent communication with social workers, families and other relevant professionals. Effective communication ensures that all matters relating to the care of young people are shared appropriately. A social worker commented that, 'The staff team are very good and experienced. They are always very welcoming and keep me updated. I can only think of good things to say about this home.'

The maintenance, furnishings and décor of the home are of a high standard. The home is comfortable and replicates family living.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

There are good systems in place which promote the safety and welfare of young people. Young people are protected because of the safeguarding knowledge of the staff. Extensive and individualised risk assessments, combined with the application of robust policies and procedures, help to keep young people safe.

There have been incidents of young people going missing from the home since the last inspection. When this occurs, staff follow clearly-defined procedures and are proactive in managing these incidents. A multi-agency response ensures that young people missing from care are located and returned. Young people receive effective support from staff on their return and develop safer behaviour as a result of this.

Staff effectively implement safeguarding procedures when concerns arise. They work

in partnership with external agencies, such as, the police, youth justice, social workers and Local Authority Designated Officer. This minimises the risks posed to young people and safeguards their welfare.

The home does not use physical restraint as a method of behaviour management. While staff are suitably trained in restraint techniques, the home prefers to use diversionary and de-escalation techniques to manage behaviour. Positive behaviour is promoted through a range of incentive and reward schemes.

Young people state that they feel safe and secure living at this home. There have been no allegations made since the last inspection and no complaints. Young people report no incidents of bullying within the home.

Staff employed to work in the home experience a rigorous selection process prior to taking up their positions. There have been no new staff members since the last inspection, with the exception of the new manager. Young people benefit from consistent care delivered by a stable staff team.

The home is physically safe for the young people. Maintenance within the home is of a good standard with staff implementing consistent monitoring and security to ensure the safety of young people.

Leadership and management

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

The home has a new manager in place who has applied to Ofsted to be the Registered Manager. The manager is a highly experienced and knowledgeable professional who has extensive direct experience in working with young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

There were no requirements or recommendations made at the last inspection. The home demonstrates a strong capacity for continuing improvement based on its track record and performance since the last inspection.

Young people benefit from highly effective management and monitoring of the home's practices. The manager undertakes rigorous routine monitoring activities in addition to the independent monitoring visits that are completed by an independent person. The manager is highly enthusiastic and continually improves and develops the service, based on the information obtained through these activities. The development plan outlines future planned developments and improvements for the home. Young people's inclusion in these processes is a key feature. The systems in place ensure that young people receive a consistently high quality of care and achieve positive outcomes.

Systems for the management of staff are thorough and effective. Staff report feeling fully supported by the new manager. They are positive about the manager's leadership. Staff training is excellent with regular mandatory training and further

specialist training and equip staff well to deal with the needs presented the young people.

Supervision arrangements are consistent and rigorous in detail. Regular meetings between managers and staffs underpin reflective care practice and improvement throughout the home. The management team nurture and develop staff and enhance their professional development. Young people achieve good outcomes because of a highly effective staff team who are well trained and extremely well supported.

Young people's records are comprehensive, clear and contribute to a thorough understanding of the young person's life. They outline their experiences and plans for the future. Young people are encouraged to contribute to their case files. Extensive care plans describe young people's needs and the strategies to be used to help them fulfil their potential. All staff members fully understand and consistently implement these. All records are stored securely.

The manager has systems in place to notify relevant agencies, including Ofsted, of significant events. This ensures young people are protected by the effective sharing of information with external agencies.

No requirements or recommendations for improvement have been made following this inspection.

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* and the evaluation schedule for children's homes.