

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Mark Kersh
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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 a privately run children's home, which provides care and accommodation for two young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Overall effectiveness

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

Young people enjoy living at the home and they benefit from good quality care. Their needs are positively identified in detailed care plans and this enables staff to support young people and address their needs effectively. Young people benefit from positive relationships with staff, most of whom are appropriately skilled, experienced and qualified.

The views of young people are central to the how the home operates and this enables young people to have a positive influence in how the home is run. As a result, young people can contribute to decisions made within the home and have a say in the decisions made about their care.

Young people report positively about their relationships with all staff and their care experiences, they say 'it's a good home... the manager and my key worker are good and listen to me'. They also say they know how to make a complaint and that staff are brilliant, activities are good and rules are fair.

All staff demonstrate a good awareness of safeguarding matters and as a result young people say they are safe and feel safe.

As a result of this inspection there has been one recommendation raised, to ensure young people have a pathway plan to identify which key people will assist them to make a transition into adulthood.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that young people have support plans for promoting independence. (NMS 12.2)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people achieve better outcomes across all aspects of their development, which helps them grow in confidence. Staff promote young people's independence and they are encouraged to take appropriate risks and responsibility for their age and understanding. They are involved in the daily running of the home, cooking, shopping and cleaning. These practices help equip young people with the skills and competence for adulthood; however, detailed plans for independence are not in place to guide this.

Young people receive the services they need to promote their physical and emotional health. Young people are registered with local health services and have access to specialist services to meet their identified needs. There are good arrangements in place for the safe administration of first aid and medication. Young people benefit from trained staff who ensure young people's health matters are monitored and consistently met.

Attendance at school has been hampered by the reluctance of young people engaging in identified provisions which suit their individual learning needs. Nevertheless the home has an education programme in place and young people are encouraged to take part in educational activities in which they have achieved various awards. This has also contributed to building their self esteem and developing existing skills.

Young people make an active contribution to routine matters, their plans and the overall running of the home. This is good because this ensures that they are aware of their plans and involved in any decisions which may affect them. Any matters affecting them in the home are addressed without delay. Young people regularly take part in staff meetings, where their views are listened to and acted upon. Young people make a positive contribution to the home and have some positive engagement with the wider community; they attend local events and have good relations with neighbours.

Staff work closely with placing authorities to promote contact for young people that is positive, safe and enjoyable. They facilitate contact within the home and encourage family to maintain relationships with young people. Staff value the importance of contact for young people in understanding their background and heritage. They are also aware of the emotional impact of contact upon young people and ensure that they are sensitively supported.

Quality of care

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

Staff and young people enjoy good relationships. Staff have a positive attitude and are highly motivated and enthusiastic about providing good quality care. The staff team are proactive and imaginative in finding ways to ensure young people get the

most from their stay in this home. They work effectively as a team, but also with families and other professionals, to ensure achievable targets are met.

Staff are extremely focused ensuring young people have a voice and are listened to and this is strongly evidenced in their day-to-day practice. They provide young people with frequent opportunities to share their views and opinions to enable them to have an effective influence in the running of the home. Consequently, young people feel their views and opinions are treated seriously.

Young people know how to complain and they receive advice and support, which enables them to do so. Young people know what services they can turn to for support to raise their complaints or concerns. For example, they are aware of the contact details for Ofsted and the Children's Rights Director. This enables young people to raise issues with people who are independent of the home.

Young people are treated respectfully and respect is encouraged between young people and staff. Individual diverse needs are appropriately identified and addressed, both in daily living and care planning. Young people confirm they know their care plans and sign their name for agreement. This ensures daily progress can be made and monitored. Staff place the well-being of young people at the centre of their practice. For example, staff pay good attention to personal safety issues, health needs and special dietary requirements. This helps young people to feel valued and to achieve a healthy and positive personal identity.

Staff are positive in their support of education, offering a variety of activities and opportunities to enhance and reinforce learning and personal development. Good consideration is given to the diverse needs that young people have and this ensures appropriate education provision is identified in which young people are able to sustain. All progress and achievements are celebrated. This positive, nurturing approach is a particular strength of the home.

Young people are able to enjoy their interests, develop confidence in their skills and are supported and encouraged by staff to engage in leisure activities. A range of purposeful and enjoyable activities are available to young people; who say that the activities are 'good'.

Young people live in a relaxed, homely environment which blends seamlessly into the residential area. They have their own bedrooms that are personalised and reflect their interests. Young people are involved in plans for re-decoration and furnishing of the home which provides ownerships and responsibility.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people report feeling safe. They are enjoying their time in the home and there is no bullying. Staff in the home have had good training in safeguarding young people's welfare. They give a clear account of appropriate responses to any incidents

that must be reported to senior staff that safeguard young people in the home. They have a good understanding of the home's safeguarding and whistle blowing procedures.

There are risk assessments and protocols in place in the event of young people going missing and staff are clear about the level of individual support needed to keep young people safe during outings. Young people resident at the time of this visit do not go missing. The home has appropriate systems in place should this happen.

Young people are actively encouraged to develop socially acceptable behaviour through incentives and rewards. Unacceptable behaviour is challenged appropriately and sanctions used by staff, are fair. Staff are trained in positive behaviour management and behaviour management plans are in place. There have been no restraints; young people say that the rules are fair and confirm that they have not been restrained while in this home.

All staff working with in the home are carefully selected and vetted and there is monitoring of such people to help prevent unsuitable people from having the opportunity to harm young people. Upon arrival visitors are asked for identification and asked to sign into the visitor's record and this further safeguards young people. Good systems are implemented consistently by staff to ensure the home provides young people with a safe and secure environment. Health and safety is treated seriously and this ensures young people are protected from potential hazards.

Leadership and management

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

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced and has good support from a senior worker and the staff team, who work effectively together and feel valued. Young people are very much central to the home's ethos and the service continues to demonstrate capacity for further improvement and positively manage change.

The home has a proven track record and demonstrates that positive improvements have been made since the previous inspection. All recommendations made at the last inspection have been addressed. As a result young people are encouraged and do record their views about the fairness of disciplinary measures used. All records within the home are now easily accessible, and staff receive regular supervision.

The provider meets the aims and objectives in the Statement of Purpose. Young people also have a copy of the children's guide. Both documents offer a variety of useful information; this ensures that young people, staff and the placing authority are clear about the aims and objectives of the home and what services and facilities it provides.

The service is regularly monitored and any shortfalls are identified and action taken. A written development plan is in place which is understood by staff. This provides goals to achieve in order to further improve the service and meet achievable

outcomes within specific timescales.

There are sufficient staff employed at the home to meet young people's needs. Staff benefit from good quality training which enables them to understand their roles and ensures they undertake their duties, professionally. Consequently, young people benefit from a well-trained and experienced staff group. Most staff are qualified and those who are not qualified are currently being trained to ensure they are equipped with the skills required to meet young people's needs.

Young people's records are clear and up to date. Files are stored securely for confidential purposes. The management team pursues information from placing authorities to ensure that files will contribute to young people's experiences within the home and an understanding of their lives.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.