

## Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC356864        |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 24/09/2012      |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Sarah Oldham    |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Full            |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home |

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| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 07/02/2012 |
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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

The home is a privately run children's home, which provides care and accommodation for up to two young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

### 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 **adequate**.

Young people benefit from positive care and support from the staff team at the home. Staff engage and consult with young people about their care and daily living. Young people confirm that their wishes and views are acted upon. They say that they are able to raise any issues of concern and they know how to make a complaint.

All young people have a placement plan that details how the home is to meet individual needs. Plans are regularly updated and informed by appropriate consultation with young people and social workers. However, placement plans retain too much historical information. This leads to confusion about essential current matters; for example, health care and health promotion issues, support required for educational achievement and planning for independence.

Young people are involved in education and planning for their future. Education attendance has increased and educational qualifications have been obtained by some young people. Staff support young people with preparing for adulthood and finding accommodation when they move out of the home.

Young people are safe in the home. Staff undertake safeguarding training and demonstrate a clear knowledge of safe working practices. The home has safeguarding procedures in place that are compatible with the local authority's safeguarding procedures.

A new manager has recently been appointed to the home and has submitted an application to Ofsted to be the Registered Manager. Regulation 33 monitoring of the

home is effective and is undertaken by a senior manager within the company. Reports are forwarded to Ofsted within a timely manner.

This inspection identified a number of shortfalls in the home. For example, documentation within children's files is not always fully completed and medication records are not always correctly documented. Placement plans sometimes contain outdated information and not all staff are aware of the missing-from-home protocol. Regulation 34 monitoring reports have not been submitted to Ofsted as required by the Children's Homes Regulations 2001.

## 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<br>(2001) | ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for the recording and safe administration of any medicines received into the children's home (Regulation 21 (1))                                              | 30/10/2012 |
| 28<br>(2001) | ensure that the record maintained in respect of each child who is accommodated in the children's home is kept up to date and is signed and dated by the author of each written entry (Regulation 28 (1)(b)©) | 30/10/2012 |
| 34<br>(2001) | supply to HMCI a report in respect of any review conducted for the purposes of paragraph (1). (Regulation 34 (2))                                                                                            | 30/10/2012 |

### Recommendations

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

- ensure that staff working within the home know the local authority and home's policy in relation to children going missing and understand their role in implementing that policy (NMS 5.2)
- ensure that clear, up-to-date records to promote children's health, education and skills for adulthood are developed and promoted in accordance with their placement plan. (NMS 6, 8, and 12. Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations, Volume 5, chapter 2, 2.20, 2.43, 2.47, 2.51, 2.118 and 2.135)

### Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make adequate progress during their placement at the home. They have positive relations with staff and say that overall, they are supported well. Staff support and encourage young people to maintain good health. All young people are registered with health care professionals, including doctors, dentists and opticians. They are supported to attend health care appointments. Where additional health care needs are identified, for example support through children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), appropriate referrals are made. Further support is also available through the organisation's clinical psychologist. This intervention enables young people to begin to develop meaningful attachments and to develop a positive self-view.

Young people are supported to engage in education and have achieved some positive educational outcomes from their initial starting points, including some good exam results. The home has good links with the school attended by young people and they encourage and support young people to attend on a regular basis. Some young people, prior to living at the home, did not previously engage in education. This has impacted on the overall attendance levels in the home.

Individual placement plans contain information to support educational outcomes, but when updated, previous information still remains on the plan and does not clearly reflect young people's educational needs. Clear incentives are in place to encourage school attendance, with positive results. Young people's achievements are recognised and celebrated. This contributes to young people feeling that their achievements are valued.

Young people benefit from appropriate contact with their families, friends and people who are important to them. Staff support and facilitate contact where this has been agreed with the placing authority. This further promotes young people's sense of belonging and identity.

Young people benefit from a range of leisure activities. Many of these are undertaken within the local community, including using leisure facilities, youth organisations and sporting clubs. Trips away from the home, including short breaks are used and young people choose where they would like to go for a short holiday or break. This is valued by the young people.

Young people are supported to prepare for independence. They are supported to budget, shop, prepare and cook food as well as undertaking other household tasks including cleaning and laundering of clothes. They are also supported with applying for appropriate housing when they move out of the home. Young people value this support. However, not all young people of the appropriate age, have a current pathway plan in place that clearly reflects their individual plans for transition into adulthood.

## Quality of care

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

Individual placement plans are in place for all young people. These plans provide an overview of their needs and how these will be met. They are kept under review and updated. However, placement plans contain a range of outdated historical information in relation to health and care needs, so they are not suitably robust.

Young people say that they have a good relationship with staff and feel that staff listen to their views. One young person said 'staff listen to me and I am able to raise any issues or concerns that I have with them. They have helped me to settle in here and support me to have regular contact with people who are important to me.'

Young people's views contribute to the running of the home. Regular young people's meetings are held as well as individual one-to-one key worker sessions. Young people are involved in their statutory reviews and contribute to these. These measures enable young people to develop confidence in their future plans.

Information regarding making a complaint is detailed within the Statement of Purpose and the children's guide. Young people confirm that they know how to make a complaint. One young person said 'I am able to talk to staff or the manager, but I also can contact my social worker if I have any concerns.'

Young people are supported with their educational needs. The home works proactively with education settings to ensure that continuity of support is provided. Where a young person is not in full time education, there are clear plans in place to increase levels of attendance and to provide ongoing educational support within the home. This includes supporting young people to complete educational tasks within the home.

Young people are supported to lead healthy lifestyles. All young people have individual health plans. However, some information has not been clearly updated within these documents, so plans do not fully reflect all their current needs.

Records of appointments attended vary in information and do not provide a comprehensive overview of all current health care needs for all young people. However, staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the individual health care needs of the young people and ensure that verbal information is given during daily handovers. Training is also provided to staff to enable them to understand how to support young people with their behavioural and emotional problems.

Access is available to additional support for those young people who have experienced attachment issues, loss and trauma. This is provided by the in-house clinical psychologist and access to mental health services. This has enabled some positive outcomes for young people by enabling them to be supported in addressing issues that impact on them.

Healthy eating is discussed with young people and they contribute their choices to menu planning. Young people are supported with the management of medication. Some young people manage their own medication, whilst others receive support with

this. Records are maintained of medication administered. However, when young people decline medication, some records are not clearly recorded. This does not ensure robust systems are in place for the management and administration of medication.

Young people live in a homely environment. The home is furnished, decorated and maintained to a good standard. There is a planned decoration and maintenance programme in place with plans for further decoration to the hallway, stairs and landing to be undertaken in the next few months. Young people are able to personalise their rooms and choose decors to reflect their own personalities and interests. They have keys to their own rooms to enable them to keep their possessions safe. They are supported to undertake household tasks. This promotes their skills for independent living and supports them to understand the importance of maintaining a clean and homely environment.

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

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

Young people say that they feel safe living at the home and are able to discuss any concerns with staff. Staff have undertaken training on safeguarding and there are appropriate arrangements in place to promote the safety and welfare of young people. Some senior staff from the organisation have recently undertaken training in managing allegations to enable effective support to be provided to further promote the safety and welfare of young people.

Individual behaviour management plans and risk assessments are in place for all young people. This ensures that staff have clear information on the strategies to use to promote positive behaviours. Sanctions are rarely used but if they are, these are recorded and explained to the young people. Young people say that they feel that the sanctions made are fair. Physical intervention training has been undertaken by staff but restraint is rarely used and there have been no physical interventions since the last inspection. Young people are helped to understand the consequences of risk taking behaviours. The home has a missing-from-care strategy and protocol in place. However, some unauthorised absences have been recorded as missing-from-care, due to some staff being unclear about the procedure to follow. This does not ensure that the records are a clear reflection of the actual number of times that young people have been missing and their whereabouts unknown.

Systems are in place to ensure that young people live in a safe and secure environment. All appropriate health and safety appliance checks are completed and young people are aware of and have taken part in fire evacuations. This ensures that they are aware of the procedure to follow in the event of a fire and how to exit the building quickly and safely.

Recruitment of staff is robust. Appropriate checks, including Criminal Record Bureau enhanced disclosures obtained prior to commencement of employment as well as references from previous employment.

Staff are vigilant in ensuring that all visitors to the home are appropriately vetted and required to sign the visitors' book. These measures promote the safety and well-being of young people from the risk of harm.

## **Leadership and management**

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

The home has a newly-appointed manager, who has submitted an application to Ofsted to be the Registered Manager for two homes. The manager has introduced systems to improve recording and to ensure that staff are effectively supported. This includes ensuring that supervision is undertaken formally on a regular basis as well informal supervision. This enables staff to have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in supporting young people to achieve positive outcomes.

New staff undertake the Children's Workforce Development Council induction standards and those staff without a level 3 qualification in working with children and young people have commenced this training. Ongoing training and development is available to all staff with some training being mandatory and renewed on a regular basis. This includes safeguarding and managing challenging behaviour. These measures enable staff to have the necessary knowledge to provide care and support to young people.

The manager understands the key strengths of the home and this is underpinned by a clear development plan. Monthly Regulation 33 monitoring visits are undertaken by a senior manager for the organisation and a report submitted to the home and Ofsted. These provide an overview of how the home is functioning. The manager undertakes monthly Regulation 34 monitoring. However, reports have not been submitted to Ofsted as required to demonstrate the ongoing review and development of the service.

The home's Statement of Purpose outlines the aims and objectives of the home and how the young people are cared for. This document is kept under review and is made available to parents and placing social workers. Young people are provided with a children's guide. This provides them with information about the home and how they will be cared for. Wherever possible, young people are able to visit the home prior to moving in. This enables them to meet staff and other young people living there and to have an understanding of how the home functions. Where it is not possible to visit prior to admission, information regarding the home is provided. Staffing levels are appropriate to meet the individual assessed needs of young people.

All young people have individual case files. Files are stored securely to maintain confidentiality for all young people.

A recommendation made at the last inspection in relation to staff being aware of legislation and guidance with regard to overnight stays for young people, has been

addressed.

## 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.