

## Inspection report for children's home

---

|                                |                  |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC357468         |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 05/11/2013       |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Valerie Shephard |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Full             |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home  |

---

|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 27/02/2013 |
|--------------------------------|------------|

---

© Crown copyright 2013

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

## Service information

### Brief description of the service

The privately owned children's home provides care and accommodation for one young person with 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 **good**.

The home has recently admitted young people following a period of six months without any children on roll.

The home provides good quality care to young people in accordance with highly individualised care plans. Young people have a voice and a positive input into their day-to-day lives in the home. There are early signs of good and constructive relationships developing between staff and young people. This assists young people to start to develop emotional resilience and a positive self-view.

Staff demonstrate safe working practices and young people say they feel safe. There are no missing from home events and young people do not engage in risk-taking behaviour. The home's focus on positive behaviour management strategies are proving effective in encouraging young people to behave appropriately.

Management arrangements are strong, with the manager effectively sharing her time between this home and another within the company. The company is currently implementing a new therapeutic model in a number of their homes, including this one. This means that the home is able to offer placements with a therapeutic package for young people who need this provision. Staff have received training in this model to enable them to support the work of the team of psychologists and therapists.

One recommendation has been made as a result of this inspection. This relates to ensuring that young people know what to do in the event of an emergency occurring in the home.

## 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 there is an emergency plan that all staff and young people are familiar with particularly in relation to who the young person would contact in the event of a critical event with the lone staff member. (NMS 10.9)

### Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people enjoy good outcomes commensurate with the length of time they have lived in the home. They are happy and take a pride in their appearance, demonstrated by their clothing and hairstyle choices. Staff support young people to maintain good personal hygiene and acquire appropriate self-care skills. Due to their early life experiences, young people's capacity to form attachments to others is likely to take time. However, there is evidence of them beginning to develop trusting relationships with members of staff. Effective use of praise and encouragement by staff members enhances this process.

Young people enjoy attending the company's own school until plans are finalised for their integration into mainstream education. There is good attendance and reports indicate that young people are making favourable progress in accordance with their abilities. Young people are learning how to manage their time so that they can be up and ready for school. Staff use praise and encouragement to support young people to address problems such as punctuality.

Young people enjoy good physical health. They benefit from access to community health care services through registration with a local doctor, dentist and optician. One young person said, "staff look after me well and really care about me." Young people are starting to address their emotional and psychological health needs through the provision of therapy on site. Young people generally engage well with their therapy, which enhances their ability to make sense of their backgrounds and early life history.

While there are a range of activities in the community, young people choose to spend time with staff in the home. Their preference is to engage in pastimes such as arts and crafts, cooking, baking, knitting and playing board games. Young people benefit from the provision of a nurturing environment and the sense of safety that staff create in the home. As a result, they do not currently venture out of the home to engage in social activities. Staff offer appropriate encouragement in this area and continue to create opportunities for engagement in a wider range of activities.

Young people benefit by maintaining on-going contact with people of significance to

them. Staff enable young people to meet their contact needs. Sustaining important relationships has a positive impact on young people's self-esteem and assists them with their identity.

Young people acquire independence skills in accordance with their age and stage of development. They learn how to keep their bedrooms tidy, cook simple meals and sort out their laundry. As young people develop these skills, confidence in their abilities grow. For example, the ability of a young person to manage their money resulted in the lifting of supervision of spending money.

## Quality of care

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

The home provides an exceedingly nurturing and supportive environment to young people who require help to develop positive relationships and attachments. Young people say they like living in the home and know that staff care about them.

There is effective consultation with young people, so that their wishes and feelings regarding the running of the home are fully considered. Formal and informal consultations capture young people's views and wishes about matters such as activities, menus, education and spending money. Young people do not complain, although they know how to do so if necessary.

A small, committed and well-trained staff team provides good quality care to young people in accordance with their individual placement plans. An independent reviewing officer said, 'the home offers a good package of care to this young person. Staff meet young people's needs very well with good individualised care. It is a very encouraging and supportive staff team.'

Staff fully support young people with their education. They work hard to ensure that young people are ready and prepared for their school day. Where young people struggle with punctuality, staff use praise and encouragement to effect change in their behaviour. Strong working relationships between the home and teaching staff ensure transition plans are adhered to for the benefit of young people.

Staff make sure that young people have access to primary care professionals to meet their physical health needs. Staff provide wholesome meals which assist young people to learn about healthy eating and the importance of daily fruit and vegetables. The provision of therapy on site meets young people's emotional and psychological needs. Part of the therapeutic process involves conducting fruitful life story work with young people to aid their understanding of their early history. This supports young people in the development of their identity and a positive self-view.

A range of activities is available in the community and staff offer encouragement to young people to participate in these. Staff members acknowledge that sometimes young people need time to settle before they are able to socialise successfully outside the home.

Young people say they enjoy living in the home. Staff and young people work together to provide a tidy, clean and comfortable environment. Young people are proud of their own space which is personalised to suit their taste and interests.

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

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

Young people are safe in the home and confirm that staff care for them well and keep them safe. Young people do not go missing from home and consequently do not place themselves in unsafe situations.

A range of risk assessments enable young people to experience normal growth and development while remaining safe. Computers in the home are fitted with safety settings to protect against potential risks from the internet, particularly social media sites. A lone-working risk assessment effectively addresses issues raised as a result of one-to-one staffing. However, a shortfall arises in relation to whether the young person knows who they should contact in the event of an emergency. This is particularly pertinent should the emergency involve the one member of staff on shift.

The home employs a positive approach to behaviour management and currently does not use sanctions with young people. Staff focus on using praise and encouragement which allows young people to make mistakes and learn from these. If difficulties arise, competent use of re-direction and de-escalation strategies generally diffuses potentially difficult situations. Young people are encouraged to use 'reflection time' to consider their behaviour. Due to the competent skills of staff in managing young people, restraint is rarely necessary in the home.

The home provides training for staff to ensure they have the knowledge and skills necessary to care for young people safely. Staff understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection and the protocols to follow in the event of concerns. Robust recruitment procedures help to ensure that adults who pose a risk to young people do not work in the home. Verification of checks and references supports competent and safe practice in this respect. All these measures ensure effective safeguarding of young people in the home.

The home provides a physically safe environment for young people as a result of regular health and safety checks. Fire drills occur at frequent intervals which assist young people to understand the procedures to follow if there is an emergency. These measures ensure the home continues to be a safe place for young people to live in.

### **Leadership and management**

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

The home benefits from an experienced manager. She effectively leads the staff to provide very good care to young people to meet their holistic needs. The manager

has addressed the two requirements made at the last inspection. These related to numbers and qualifications of staff and the use of behaviour management strategies in the home.

A sufficient number of suitably qualified staff support the needs of young people on a one-to-one staffing basis. Staff members hold a recognised child care qualification and possess the knowledge and skills necessary to provide good care to young people. Staffing levels are reviewed and careful and sensitive consideration given to the mix of staff in terms of gender and age. Effective supervision of staff ensures there is an on-going overview of their child care practice. This ensures that staff can fully meet the needs of young people, enabling them to achieve optimum outcomes.

The manager and staff team are enthusiastic and committed to the newly implemented therapy model. They have undertaken relevant training to enable them to support the delivery of therapeutic care to young people. Consultation with members of the therapy team provides staff with the tools to effectively manage behaviour in a nurturing and supportive manner. This new model of working demonstrates the home's capacity for continuous improvement for the benefit of young people.

The manager has a full understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. Regular review of the home's development plan ensures it is on track to achieve targets set. The home meets the aims and objectives set out in the statement of purpose. A range of efficient monitoring takes place with effective reporting under Regulations 33 and 34. Timely submission of reports to Ofsted in accordance with requirements ensures that the regulator has an overview of the home's operations.

Records are up to date, easy to follow and provide full information to the reader. Young people's files are thorough, providing a narrative of their life prior to admission to the home. There are detailed accounts of the efforts the manager and staff have made to obtain relevant information from placing authorities. The provision of this information is crucial to ensure that care delivery, including therapy is tailor made to young people's individual needs.

The home provides a clean, tidy and comfortable environment which meets health and safety standards. Regular maintenance ensures the home provides a safe space for young people to live in.

## 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 the inspection of children's homes.