

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC357468
Inspection date	10/12/2012
Inspector	Helen Walker
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	29/02/2012
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2012

Website: 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**.

Young people make good progress in the home. They receive high quality care from a consistent and well informed staff team who are knowledgeable about young people's individual needs. Professionals have very positive views about the staff and care provided.

Young people say they feel safe, they like the staff who care for them and are comfortable at the home. Staff have a very clear understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities which helps them to keep young people safe from harm. Young people are encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle. Their health needs are well considered and met through contact with a range of health professionals.

Staff support young people's access to education and training which improves their life chances and career opportunities through learning. Young people have many opportunities to give their opinions and make choices about their care and future. Young people access activities in the wider community and have staff support to engage in exceptional opportunities relating to social inclusion.

The home is managed by a qualified and experienced manager and the staff team are well supported by the management team. Effective monitoring systems provide the manager with a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the home.

Two recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection. These relate to behaviour management and life story work with young people.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure the home's approach to care minimises the need for police involvement to deal with challenging behaviour (NMS 3.22)
- ensure staff record and help children make a record of (subject to age and understanding), significant life events. (NMS 22.6)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make good progress at the home in terms of their health, education and support for their emotional well-being. Young people said they like living at the home and consider staff help them to learn skills for when they leave the home. Young people said they assist with household tasks and have been able to save money to buy Christmas presents for their family. Pathway planning for those preparing to leave care is underway and assists them to develop skills for independent living.

Young people are encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle through a good diet, exercise and access to health professionals. They are helped to understand the importance of good health and have regular access to appropriate health promotion services. Young people are proud of their achievements to stop smoking following advice from medical professionals. They have gained successful college placements and attend daily. Young people said they enjoy learning and socialising with their peers and look forward to a chosen career.

Young people's sense of identity and belonging is promoted through meaningful contact with their families. They benefit from staff who understand the importance of maintaining strong family links. Young people have the opportunity for their siblings to stay overnight at the home. However, life story work with young people is not routinely undertaken. This means they are not always aware of their life history and reasons for living in the home. Additionally, they have little tangible evidence to reflect on their time spent in care.

Quality of care

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

Young people's individual needs are met by staff who are familiar with their routine and care needs. They say they know and like the staff who look after them. Staff ensure young people have access to services and care that promotes their welfare. A social work professional said staff develop warm and caring relationships with young

people.

Staff actively support young people to engage in education and training so that they are well prepared for working and adult life. They have made significant strides, enabling young people to have opportunities that enhance their life chances. A young person said they had recently been with staff and other young people on a trip abroad to work with disadvantaged children. They said they found this to be an 'amazing' experience and really enjoyed an insight into a different social and cultural environment.

A range of participation events enable young people to have their say and talk to people who are independent of the home. Young people said they feel listened to. They enjoy choosing and cooking teatime meals, personalising their bedroom and they proudly showed their choice of lounge wallpaper. Young people know how to make a complaint should they need to and have used the complaints process with positive outcomes.

Staff are realistic with young people and enable them to consider and understand that there are times when they cannot always have what they want. They actively encourage young people's involvement in leisure pursuits and hobbies such as swimming and trips to places of interest.

Medication is stored securely and all staff have received medication administration training. This helps to ensure medication is given properly and in accordance with the prescription. Additionally, staff have a current first aid qualification and are confident to carry out emergency first aid as necessary.

Young people contribute to their placement plans and attend meetings that allow them to voice their views about their care and future. Individual behaviour management plans are in place to support young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour. However, there are times when police have been called to the home to support staff in managing young people's heightened behaviour. Young people dislike this approach and consider staff are often inconsistent in the way they manage these episodes.

The home is located in a smart residential area. It provides a comfortable, spacious living environment and is warm and welcoming.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people said they feel safe and well cared for at the home. Staff understand and are confident about their safeguarding responsibilities and know what action to take should a safeguarding situation arise. Staff undertake child protection training which helps to keep them well informed and promote young people's welfare. A social work professional said they consider staff protect young people from harm and offer them good advice about keeping safe.

Staff follow the local police protocol for missing from care episodes. Young people rarely go missing from the home. They said they are sometimes late returning to the home rather than missing. However, they are encouraged to always make contact with staff and inform them of their whereabouts.

Young people benefit from staff who are good role models and support them to develop confidence, self-respect and respect for others. The young people's placement plan and risk assessments assist staff to care for them in accordance with their care plan. Staff promote young people's positive behaviour through praise and rewards without the need for physical intervention or sanctions.

Appropriate arrangements are in place to help ensure that staff recruited to work with young people are suitable and safe. Young people live in a home where regular health and safety checks are carried out to provide an environment safe from hazards to health.

Leadership and management

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

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced and this assists her to provide good leadership and effective management of the home. Staff have very good support and supervision from the manager in relation to their work and professional development. The majority of staff have an appropriate childcare qualification to support them in their work with the young people.

A consistent and caring staff team understand young people's individual personalities and needs. A social work professional said staff have supported young people to make significant improvements in their life while at the home. They have developed in their social skills through activities such as the trip overseas. This has particularly increased their confidence and enabled them to make progress in education and for their future.

There are adequate staffing levels in the home from staff who provide continuity of care. Young people confirm a regular staff team care for them. Professionals say the home environment and staffing arrangements have significantly benefited the young people. Staff are keen and enthusiastic to provide a high standard of care to young people. The organisation demonstrates a good commitment to staff training and development.

The manager has a good overview of the running of the home and there are comprehensive monitoring systems to ensure the home is run in line with its Statement of Purpose. The manager has ensured that the shortfall identified at the last inspection relating to medication record keeping has been addressed. This ensures recording is accurate and reflects the quantity of medication held on the premises.

The home maintains detailed records about the care and welfare of young people. Young people are supported by staff to engage and contribute to their case records so that they have an input about their future and care at the home.

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.