

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Rebecca Sharp
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is privately owned and is registered to provide care for a maximum of four children with emotional and 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 overall effectiveness of the provision is rated as good in all areas. Young people receive well planned and individualised care by a child focused and experienced staff team. Young people are involved in the planning process and therefore have a sound understanding of their needs and how to work with the home to achieve them. There are many strategies in place to keep young people safe and young people report that they feel safe living at the home.

The views of young people are regularly sought by staff and management through various forms of consultation. The results of the consultation are taken into account around the review of the quality of care provided by the home. These processes have been influential in the development of the home since the last inspection.

Young people enjoy living at the home and experience positive relationships with staff. They are consistently positive about the care that they receive. One young person stated that the, 'staff are the best thing about the home'. Staff have a sound understanding of individuals needs and tailor their practice appropriately. Individuals are making encouraging progress from their starting points as a result of consistent behaviour management.

The management of the home is strong and the manager has a clear vision for the development of the service and ways in which to maintain and develop the quality of care for young people. Requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection have been met and improvements made since the last inspection have had a positive impact on the outcomes for young people. One recommendation has been made at this inspection in relation to the security of the front door. This was

discussed during the inspection and the manager has put a strategy in place to rectify the issue.

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 location and design promotes children's health, safety and wellbeing and avoids factors that present significant risks to children. This is in particular reference to the security of the front door. (NMS 10.2)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people enjoy good health. Staff ensure all statutory health appointments are up to date, and specialist treatment is supported well. Young people are encouraged to maintain a healthy lifestyle through diet and exercise which contributes positively to their physical and emotional well-being. Dedication from staff in implementing consistent behaviour management strategies inspires young people to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to develop alternative approaches in times of emotional crisis. In depth key work sessions take place regularly which further strengthens young people's ability to develop both their emotional resilience and a positive self-view.

Education is placed in high regard and its significance is embedded in the ethos of the home. Not only for academic achievements, but also to assist young people in maintaining a successful routine; improve confidence and self-esteem; and develop social skills. Attendance is good for some young people. Alternative strategies are put into place for those who are excluded from school or have completed mandatory education. There are close links with the local education authority and youth offending team. By working in partnership young people are supported to achieve positive outcomes. There have been some delays in securing formal education placements for some young people. This has been compensated for in the meantime by home tutoring to ensure young people are productively engaged in preparation for their future placement.

Constructive attachments have been formed between staff and young people. One social worker commented on the impact of these relationships, 'which has been very positive for the young person'. Young people experience affirmative contact with their family and those important to them. The home works closely with the placing authority and parents in order to ensure attachments and relationships are maintained and for young people to form a positive sense of identity.

Young people have made exceptional progress in the reduction of anti-social and

offending behaviour in the local community. Behaviour management plans and risk assessments tailored to individuals, support young people in making a positive contribution to the home and local community. As a result, there has been a reduction in damage caused to the home. Independence skills are developed through the completion of an internal package. Work is assessed regularly to determine progress made by individuals and to focus on any shortfalls. This allows for a successful transition into independence.

Quality of care

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

Young people enjoy constructive and affirming relationships with staff and each other. Strategies are put into place to manage peer relationships in line with risk assessments. Positive behaviour is promoted well and individuals have incentive plans tailored to their needs. These have been successful in promoting young people's respect of their environment and each other. Consultation with young people is effective in influencing the day-to-day plans for the home. Their needs, wishes and views are taken into account in relation to care planning and assessing risks. Complaints are handled fairly and promptly which promotes the young people's confidence in the complaints procedure.

Internal care plans are highly individualised and reflect young people's needs in line with placing authority care plans. There are clear strategies in place which address how these needs will be met in daily living. Behaviour management plans are updated regularly in order to ensure successful approaches in dealing with challenging behaviour are consistent.

The home promotes education well. Proactive procedures are in place for young people who are awaiting an educational placement, or have been excluded from school. The home values the importance of routine and structure in the promotion of positive behaviour and academic success. As a result of this support, some young people have exceptional attendance at school. Young people are encouraged to take part in a variety of purposeful activities in order to promote their inclusion in the local community. Although the location of the home is rural, larger towns and cities are in close vicinity which offer all necessary amenities. Young people have access to a range of local health services to meet their needs and ensure good health is maintained.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people confirm they feel safe and that staff promote their welfare. This is supported by robust planning and risk management. Incidents of bullying are handled effectively in partnership with placing authorities. Comprehensive work is completed with young people identifying the issues around bullying and the implications this behaviour presents. Local police and education staff contribute to

this work which ensures consistency in the messages young people receive. Positive behaviour is promoted through good role modelling from staff and consistency in the implementation of boundaries and individual strategies. Episodes of young people being reported missing from care have reduced since their admission and incidents requiring restraint are managed well and recorded efficiently.

Allegations made by young people are handled sensitively by the management of the home. Young people are kept informed of the progress of their complaint and all necessary agencies are notified. Investigations are completed fairly and promptly in order to safeguard young people and prevent unnecessary stress for members of staff involved. Recruitment procedures are robust and every precaution is taken to reduce the likelihood of unsuitable adults working with young people.

The home is generally well maintained. The appointment of a designated maintenance worker ensures a prompt response to any health and safety issue or damage caused within the building. Communal areas are homely in their appearance and young people are given the opportunity to personalise their bedrooms through décor and furnishings. The security of the front door is a potential hazard with regards access for visitors. However, staff and young people are aware of safeguarding procedures around ascertaining identification from visitors.

Leadership and management

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

The management structure of the home has changed since the last inspection with the appointment of a new manager. Ofsted are yet to receive their application for registration. However, the impact of this transition has been reduced due to the manager transferring from another home within the group and being known to the staff and young people. This has allowed for consistency to be maintained with regards staff practice and recording systems, through strong and effective leadership.

The manager has demonstrated a capacity for improvement in the satisfactory conclusion of previous requirements and recommendations set at the last inspection. Development plans are in place and outline clear desired outcomes for the service. The manager uses a range of monitoring tools which are robust and effective and contribute to the efficiency of the management of the home and quality of care provided for young people.

The manager and staff have a sound understanding of the needs of the individuals in their care. Staff are child centred and outcomes focused. Young people's experiences at the home, since their admission, have had a significant impact on many aspects of their lives. This is demonstrated in academic achievement and the reduction in risk taking and offending behaviours.

The staff team receive high quality support from training and supervision. They are clear about the aims and objectives of the home and work consistently to achieve

these. Recording is a particular strength of the home and communication between agencies is prompt and effective in ensuring all parties are kept well informed of young people's progress.

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.