

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC370956
Inspection date	23/07/2013
Inspector	Tracy Murty
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	18/12/2012
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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 young people 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**.

Young people receive highly personalised care in this home. From their starting points, young people develop skills and confidence in all areas of their lives. Individualised care plans and assessments promote the holistic needs of young people and are regularly reviewed and updated.

Young people fully contribute to all aspects of their care in this home. One young person reported their satisfaction at the care they receive from the staff team stating, 'The staff are all really good here. Key work sessions are really good and they have helped me a lot since I moved to live here.' Staff demonstrate a detailed and clear understanding of the complex needs of each young person and work closely with them and other agencies to ensure their needs are met.

Young people report feeling safe in this home and that the staff keep them safe from any actual or potential harm at all times. Involved agencies also report confidence in how the staff team ensure that young people are protected from harm. The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and continually strives to ensure that young people's needs are met.

Some shortfalls were identified as a result of this inspection. These relate to some internal repair issues, recording of allegations and recording of health related issues for young people. None of these shortfalls has had an adverse impact on young people.

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
34 (2001)	ensure robust monitoring and recording of medical treatment and first aid administered to any young person accommodated in the home. (Regulation 34)(schedule 6)(14))	30/08/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home provides a comfortable and homely environment, is well maintained and decorated and that risk reduction does not lead to an institutionalised feel. This is with specific reference to the need to repair the patio doors in the main lounge, replace damaged door frame to one bedroom, consider removal of bars to some windows on ground floor and repair broken door in storage room (NMS 10.3)
- ensure that a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made against a particular member of staff, including details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, a record of any action taken and the decisions reached, is kept on the person's confidential file and a copy is provided to the person as soon as the investigation is concluded. (NMS 20.7)

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

From their starting points, young people begin to form meaningful relationships with staff and each other in this home. They demonstrate an increasingly positive sense of self and an understanding of their needs and how they will be met in this home. One young person stated that the staff have assisted them to begin to better understand the reasons for them being in care and feels that they have been supported to consider their own needs and how best to meet them.

Young people receive input and assistance to meet all of their health needs. Staff encourage and support young people to attend doctors, dentist and optician appointments. Young people also receive support and guidance through mental health services and therapeutic services provided by the home. This has led to increased awareness of their own complex emotional health needs and a sense of being valued and cared for. Young people report an increased sense of awareness

about their own health needs and of being able to work with staff to ensure that they are met at all times.

Young people's attendance and engagement in education is good and reflects the commitment of the entire staff team to ensuring that their needs in this area are met. One social worker praised the staff for ensuring that young people receive education, stating that this has often been an area where young people have struggled. Young people make positive progress in relation to education and learning and gain in confidence as a result. This leads to increased chances of securing either further education or employment opportunities whilst living in this home.

Young people engage in a range of activities in the local and wider community. This includes engagement in such activities as horse riding, swimming and trips to local places of interest. This promotes a sense of inclusion for young people in their community and a positive sense of self. The staff team actively promote contact for young people with family members. One agency praised the staff team for ensuring that young people maintain meaningful and positive contact with family members whilst living in this home. Young people feel that staff genuinely care about them and that contact is always promoted and supported for them.

Young people are well prepared for a move to independence. Staff ensure that robust and clear plans are in place to meet their current and future needs. Young people benefit from well-planned assessments and work on their emerging independence skills and needs. One young person reported confidence in how the staff team work with them to ensure that they are well prepared for the eventual move to independent living. The staff team actively encourages young people to develop and practice independence skills in all aspects of their lives. This promotes a real sense of confidence and achievement for young people over time.

Quality of care

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

Young people report feeling very well cared for by the staff team in this home. They respond positively to the commitment and support shown by the staff at all times. They feel able to discuss key issues and concerns with staff, confident in the belief that they will ensure that their holistic needs are met at all times. One agency praised the staff for how well they work with young people. They stated that it is evident that young people trust and feel safe with staff in this home.

Young people take part in regular meetings with staff to discuss their wishes and feelings. The manager responds promptly to all issues raised in these meetings and ensures that young people's views are taken into account. Young people influence how the home is run on many levels. This has included them contributing to the décor and furnishings in the home and being able to personalise their own bedrooms to reflect their personal preferences.

Staff work closely and openly with young people to ensure that their wishes and

feelings are considered at all times. Young people report feeling confident in being able to approach staff about all issues relating to their care and in understanding the reasons when their wishes may not be able to be met by staff. Young people also demonstrate a clear and detailed understanding of the home's complaints procedure and confidence in using it. Records demonstrate a real commitment by the manager to ensuring that all complaints receive prompt and detailed responses. Young people report satisfaction at how any issue or concerns they raise are dealt with. This promotes a real sense of inclusion for young people and reflects their influence on how the home is run.

Placement plans for young people reflect their individualised needs and are subject to regular reviews and updating. Young people demonstrate a good understanding of what plans are in place to meet their needs. The staff team regularly monitor and check all plans and risk assessments to ensure that they remain relevant and meet young people's complex needs.

Young people actively contribute to menu planning in this home. Staff ensure that young people's specific dietary needs are met at all times. This has included the provision of halal meats and vegetarian options. Young people report satisfaction in being able to choose what they eat and in having a healthy and balanced diet provided for them at all times. Over time, young people also begin to take on more personal responsibility for ensuring that their physical, emotional and psychological health needs are met. Staff support them to understand the need to meet their holistic health needs and to attend all relevant appointments.

Young people regularly attend educational provisions in the local area, supported by the dedicated staff team. From their starting points, young people make positive progress and articulate aspirations for their futures. Staff proactively support young people to identify further education provisions in the area and enable them to make plans for their future careers. Young people also engage in a range of social activities, which further promotes their self-esteem, confidence and sense of inclusion in the local community.

The staff team demonstrate a clear and detailed understanding of the cultural, religious and personal identity needs of each young person in this home. This is reflected in all plans and in how the home runs. Young people feel able to express their needs and to have the opportunity to explore their religious beliefs with staff support. Young people receive personalised care, which meets their specific dietary and other needs. Young people report satisfaction at knowing that staff understand their needs and that they work closely with them to ensure that they are met at all times.

The home is located in a rural area and provides a good standard of accommodation for young people. Some internal repair works have been identified as needing addressing, to further enhance the presentation of the home. Damage to a door in the main living room currently prevents it being opened. Some damage was also noted to the door frame of one bedroom and security measures present a rather institutionalised feel to some parts of the home.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people report feeling safe in this home and are kept safe by the dedicated and committed staff team. Young people receive highly personalised care, which reflects their complex needs in relation to safeguarding. A particular strength of this home is its total commitment to partnership working. Close working relationships with such agencies as the police, looked after children's nurse and local authorities provides clear and consistent safe care for vulnerable young people.

Incidents of young people going missing from this home are rare and reflect the robust planning and high staffing levels. Staff work proactively to ensure the safe return of any missing young person from this home. They work closely with placing authorities and the police to ensure the safety of young people. Missing from care protocols clearly reflect the needs of each young person and have been signed by the home, placing authorities and the police. Involvement of key agencies in meetings relating to young people is very good and further reflects the commitment of the staff team to promoting multi-agency working.

The use of restraint is also rare in this home and reflects the positive behaviour management strategies in place. Young people feel supported by the staff team to develop a clear understanding of their own behaviours and how to manage them more positively. Where restraint is used as a last resort, records clearly reflect the actions taken and include the views of young people.

The home employs a competent and well-trained staff team. The manager has robust systems in place to ensure that recruitment and selection of staff prevents unsuitable people from being employed in this home. Regular checks also contribute to the safety of young people in relation to staff working in this home. Any allegations receive prompt consideration and investigation by the manager. Close working relationships with the local authority designated officer promotes a clear and consistent focus on ensuring young people are protected from harm. Whilst investigations into any allegations are dealt with well, recording of investigations and outcomes has not routinely been placed on staff member's files.

Leadership and management

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

The home is effectively and efficiently managed. The manager has made the necessary application to Ofsted for registration within the required timescales. Staff receive regular supervision and support from the manager, which enables them to

undertake their roles with confidence and competence. Staff report satisfaction at the level of supervision and training they receive whilst working in this home. Training and development opportunities include mandatory training and refresher courses, all of which are relevant to meeting the needs of the young people placed in this home.

The manager regularly oversees all aspects of the training and supervision of staff to ensure that they are up-to-date. The manager has clear systems in place and undertakes regular monitoring and tracking of all aspects of the running of the home. The home has a detailed and relevant development plan in place, with regular reviews undertaken to ensure its relevance and progress. The home has an up-to-date Statement of Purpose which is fully compliant with regulatory requirements. Young people also receive a children's guide on admission to the home, which sets out the complaints procedures and key contact details.

The manager clearly demonstrates a detailed understanding and awareness of how young people's needs are met whilst living in this home. From their starting points, young people make good progress in relation to their attendance and attainment in education. They develop social skills and an increased awareness of their own behaviours and risks to their safety. The manager and staff team clearly understand the complex needs of each young person in the home and work hard to ensure that their holistic needs are met at all times. Involved agencies report high levels of satisfaction at how the staff team ensures that young people receive personalised care which reflects their complex needs.

Whilst young people receive prompt attention and support to meet all of their health needs, records do not consistently reflect the actions taken by staff or outcomes. The manager has failed to pick this up through their monthly monitoring systems. Whilst no young person has been placed at any risk from this, it could undermine the manager's ability to demonstrate how the quality of care provided in the home has been achieved.

The home works closely with other agencies and has positive relationships with the local community and neighbours. There have been no reported complaints from neighbours since the last inspection. No recommendations or requirements were set at the last inspection for consideration and action by the manager.

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.