

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	David Kidner
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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.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: a service that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

Good: a service that exceeds minimum requirements

Satisfactory: a service that only meets minimum requirements

Inadequate: a service that does not meet minimum requirements

Service information

Brief description of the service

The home provides care and accommodation for up to three children with a learning disability or emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is judged to be **good**.

Young people enjoy a service that is very child focused and provides very individualised care and support. There are good outcomes for young people.

The care team are committed in providing young people with opportunities in developing and promoting their independence. Young people speak well of the care and support that is provided by the care staff.

The service ensures that the educational needs of young people are encouraged and fully supported. Young people enjoy a variety of social and leisure opportunities and are assisted to keep in contact with their families and other significant people in their life.

The home has robust systems in place to monitor and evaluate the care that is provided. Leaders and managers understand the strengths and weaknesses of the home and have development plans in place.

To further improve, the home must ensure that the Statement of Purpose is reviewed and that care staff receive regular supervision. Other matters include further promoting a homely environment and that the children's guide contains the contact details of the child's independent reviewing officer and the Children's Rights Director.

Areas for improvementStatutory 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
27 (2001)	ensure that all staff receive appropriate supervision (Regulation 27 (4)(a))	31/12/2011
4 (2001)	ensure that the Statement of Purpose consists of a statement as to the matters listed in Schedule 1. (Regulation 4 (1))	07/10/2011

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 and is well maintained and decorated (NMS 10.3)
- ensure that the children's guide includes a summary of how a child can contact their Independent Reviewing Officer and the Children's Rights Director. (NMS 13.5)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make good progress in developing a positive self view and knowledge and understanding of their background. Young people are provided with good opportunities to be positively involved in the local and wider community. The home ensures that young people's individual hobbies and interests are promoted and young people state that this is important to them. The home makes appropriate adjustments to daily routines to support this. This demonstrates the home's commitment to listening and meeting the individual needs of the young people.

The home ensures that young people's independence is promoted and is appropriate to their age. Young people are actively encouraged to be involved in household chores around the home. This promotes confidence and self esteem and prepares them for adulthood.

The service ensures that young people's educational needs are fully supported in order to promote attainment and achievement. All young people receive full time education and have good attendance

Some young people have specific health care needs and the service has developed good health care plans that ensure that there is a consistent approach in managing young people's health care. This ensures that young people are supported and encouraged to develop an understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Young people benefit from appropriate contact with their family, friends and other people who are important to them.

Quality of care

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

The home is located in a semi-rural setting but with easy access to a vast selection of social, leisure and recreational activities for young people to enjoy. The service promotes a homely environment and is decorated and maintained to a satisfactory standard. However some areas of the home require maintenance and redecoration in order to further promote this. However, the home's development plan has identified areas where improvement is required. Young people's bedrooms reflect their individual needs and preferences and young people confirmed that their privacy and dignity are promoted.

Young people are supported and encouraged to engage in purposeful and enjoyable social and leisure activities including regular contact with family and friends and shopping trips. To promote engagement, decision making and confidence young people are able to plan and adjust their weekly programme of activities as and when needed.

The service actively promotes the education of young people and the care team provide encouragement and appropriate praise in areas that young people are striving to achieve. There are good links between the home, placing authorities and education facilities in order to meet the individual needs of young people. Young people state that good support is given in this area.

Placement plans clearly identify specific care needs relating to equality and diversity and these are met in practice. The home provides a healthy environment where young people are able to access the services and support they need to meet their physical, emotional and psychological needs. The home develops detailed health care plans that are regularly reviewed. This ensures that the changing needs of young people are appropriately addressed. Young people are protected with robust arrangements for the management of medicines.

Young people are provided with good information on how to make a complaint if they wish to do so. Young people state that they are aware of how to make a complaint.

There are good procedures for introducing young people to the home. This ensures that wherever possible a smooth transition to the home is promoted and young people settle in more quickly. Young people confirm that they have visited the home in order to make an informed choice of their placement. The care team ensure that the care and support is delivered based on the agreed plan of care. Placing authorities are happy with the care that is provided at the home and have no concerns as to the quality of care provided. Young people enjoy good relationships with staff. Care staff are very aware of the individual needs of the young people and are committed to ensuring that young people receive the best possible outcomes.

Young people enjoy meals that are varied, nutritious and meet their dietary needs, likes and dislikes. Menus demonstrate the promotion of meals from other countries. Young people are involved in the development of the home's menus and prepare their own snacks and drinks. This promotes self-help skills and independence.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

The home has good systems in place to ensure that young people's welfare is protected and promoted. The service ensures that any allegations or suspicions of harm are handled fairly, quickly and consistently in a way that provides effective protection for young people. Young people state that they feel safe. All care staff receive safeguarding training and the home identifies when care staff require refresher training. This ensures care staff are fully versed with policies and procedures in order to protect children. The service has good systems in place for the recruitment and vetting of care staff and all care staff working at the home have an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check.

Care staff recognise particular vulnerabilities relating to the diverse needs of the young people and steps are taken to ensure that young people are supported. Placement plans clearly identify any risks to young people and these are regularly reviewed.

The home has a robust missing person's policy and is compatible with and has regard to Runaway and Missing from Home and Care protocols and procedures, maintained and managed by the police. The frequency in which young people go missing is minimal. On return to the home young people are responded to positively.

Care staff are provided with detailed guidance on how to implement positive behaviour strategies. This ensures a consistent approach to the management of behaviours. Behaviour strategies are regularly reviewed and appropriate adjustments made if needed. Restraint is rarely used in the home and minimal sanctions have been imposed. Comprehensive individual strategies and risk assessments inform staff how to manage behaviours and give clear boundaries. Detailed records are maintained of any incidents and these are closely monitored by the home and responsible individual.

The home is physically safe and appropriately secure to take into account the needs of the young people. Fire safety checks are undertaken to promote safety and well-being.

Leadership and management

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

The homes Statement of Purpose is not comprehensive as it does not refer to all the items as listed in Schedule 1 of The Children's Homes Regulations 2001; in particular it does not include the skills and experience of the care team. The young person's guide is also not comprehensive as it does not provide young people with the contact details of their Independent Reviewing Officer and the Children's Rights Director. However, young people stated that they have received a copy of the guide and found it useful.

The home does not ensure that all the care staff receive regular supervision. However, the care staff receive sufficient training to enable them to meet the needs of the young people. For example, staff have received training in safeguarding, positive handling, first aid, food hygiene, medication, self harm and equality and diversity. The service is committed in ensuring that care staff have appropriate qualifications. The majority of the care team have a formal qualification at level 3 and newly appointed staff are identified to undertake level 3 Children and Young Peoples Workforce Diploma.

It is evident that the care team and senior managers are committed to meeting the needs of all young people. The home ensures that there are appropriate numbers of staff on duty at all times to meet their needs. The service has positive relationships with placing authorities, health services and the police. To promote the safeguarding of young people the home notifies all appropriate agencies of any significant events relating to the protection of young people.

The statutory requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed. The home is well managed and the Registered Manager conducts detailed audits on the quality of care provided at the home to ensure a high standard of care is delivered. The Regulation 33 visitor completes comprehensive reports and ensures that these are sent to Ofsted. The management team are aware of changes in new legislation and practice developments. The service has a development plan this informs good practice and the development of the service.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.