

## Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC381089        |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 12/08/2011      |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Michelle Spruce |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Full            |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home |

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| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 31/03/2011 |
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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 is registered to provide care and accommodation for two children of either sex between the ages of 10 and 17 years who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. All young people are placed in the home by the local authority in which the home is situated.

### Overall effectiveness

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

This is a good service that provides positive outcomes for young people. The key strengths lie within the staff team who deliver a good quality of care. They are motivated, passionate and enthusiastic about meeting young people's needs. The effectiveness with which the home provides personalised, well planned care is a result of streamlined systems and quality placement planning.

Safeguarding is a high priority in all aspects of the young people's care and the service in general. The monitoring systems effectively reduce risk and promote safety. However, the bedroom door does not have a sufficient lock. Young people feel safe and protected by caring and nurturing staff.

The good relationships between staff and young people enhance the development of all aspects of their welfare, underpinned by highly effective support from staff to meet young people's individual needs. Young people are treated with respect and measures are taken to ensure their wishes, views and feelings are promoted in the running of the service. However, there are occasions when young people's wishes are not met and as a result friends do not visit the home.

### 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   |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 11<br>(2001) | the registered person shall make suitable arrangements to ensue that the home is conducted in a manner which respects the privacy and dignity of young people accommodated there, this is in relation to the bedroom door. (Regulation (2)(a) | 31/08/2011 |

## Recommendations

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

- ensure young people are encouraged and enabled to make and sustain friendships with young people outside the home, which may involve friends visiting the home and reciprocal arrangements to visit friend's homes. (NMS 7.6)

## 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. They are active in building their skills and knowledge around their identity. This enables them to become more self aware and promotes self-esteem. They make good progress due to feeling valued and they thrive in a healthy nurturing environment. For example, young people are supported to access social activities both on and off site, this means independence skills are developed. As a result young people have made good progress from their starting point.

Young people's health including physical, emotional and psychological is supported and young people attend regular appointments with their doctor, optician and dentist. Young people take part in physical exercise and eat a healthy well-balanced diet. This helps to maintain a fit and healthy life style.

Young people have made significant improvement in education achievement and attainment from their starting point. Young people attend their education provision and as a result achieve recognition through certificates and award ceremonies. This means their confidence continually grows and learning opportunities provide essential life skills.

Young people benefit from appropriate contact with their family and are supported by staff. Visits are arranged and staff ensure contact takes place. As a result young people are constantly in touch with those who are significant to them. This means important bonds are maintained and strengthened. However, young people say friends don't always visit the home, this means opportunities to develop peer relationships may not be fully supported.

Young people are equipped according to their individual needs to prepare them for adult life and independence. Young people benefit from tailored assessments which outline the individual support they need for a successful transition. For example, young people are encouraged to develop skills in managing money, using public transport and undertaking shopping tasks. This actively encourages young people to develop necessary life skills. As a result young people can progress at their pace and reach the stages which suit their capabilities.

## Quality of care

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

Young people receive a good quality of care. This is a result of the positive relationships they have with a dedicated staff team who actively promote their welfare. Young people are supported to assess their behaviour that impacts on the community by accessing additional services such as the youth offending team. Young people are supported to behave appropriately. The views, wishes and feelings of young people are captured in regular meetings and consultation. Staff provide opportunities for young people to contribute to the running of the home. This includes input into the newsletter that is circulated around all the small group homes. Staff have a clear understanding of the young people's needs and this is reflected in the dedicated support they provide, they address sensitive issues in a manner that is individualised to the young person's level of understanding.

Young people know how to complain and have confidence any complaints will be well managed. Staff fully support young people's rights and as a result they are listened to.

Young people learn to manage their behaviours supported by a range of proactive and positive strategies. Staff actively break down barriers to provide young people with skills to develop positive relationships. Young people who offend are encouraged by staff and other external partners to develop self control through a range of support systems. The quality of intervention means offending behaviour is addressed, managed and supported.

Staff encourage and support young people to engage in the planning of their care through 1:1 discussion and weekly house meetings. This is central to their placement planning and ensures their needs are fully met. There are good links with education services, health care and transitional support that help to devise a tailor made package, reflective of each young person's needs. Young people access a variety of activities that provide opportunities to develop their confidence and promote social skills.

Staff have a clear and in-depth understanding of each young person's personality, this means young people benefit from fair and equal opportunities regardless of their differences. Staff encourage and support equality and diversity issues in both living and daily care planning. Young people feel their privacy is respected, although this is compromised due to a bedroom door lock being broken. However, the manager has taken necessary steps to address this at every level. Young people live in a pleasant home and contribute to the up keep of the grounds and internal space. The home is maintained appropriately to ensure a safe environment.

## Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people say they feel safe and protected from harm. Staff put young people's safety at the forefront of their work and actively promote safeguarding. The home has very clear child protection procedures in place and staff are knowledgeable in how to implement action to be taken where there are concerns regarding the safety or welfare of young people. The additional support from local community police and youth offending officers means that the safety of young people is continually monitored and supported.

Staff respond robustly to any incidence of bullying and take positive action. Where differences arise between young people in the home, young people say, 'staff help us to diffuse the situation, they sit us down to see what is happening, this does help us to sort out our differences.' This helps young people to manage conflict appropriately. Young people know who to contact if they feel at risk and have access to a telephone for private use, consequently this keeps them safe. Young people are continually monitored in regards to their safety. The care plans and risk assessments are clear and provide appropriate support to manage and reduce risk. As a result young people are kept safe.

Young people rarely go missing and have significantly reduced the occasions when they do. Young people say, 'I used to go missing but I don't anymore.' This is a result of the strong relationships and robust procedures in place. Young people are aware and understand the action staff take to ensure a prompt and efficient return in the event of missing from care. Staff promptly follow protocols to ensure young people return safely. Young people say they are treated fairly on return.

Staff are effective in promoting positive behaviour and use verbal praise along with de-escalating techniques. Young people benefit from skilled and knowledgeable staff who help them to maintain and establish acceptable levels of behaviour, resulting in no episodes of physical intervention. Staff say, 'It's about building positive relationships with young people by looking at ways to manage anger and frustration.' As a result young people develop coping strategies to manage appropriate behaviour.

Safe recruitment practice ensures only suitable people work with young people. The retention of staff is good and the manager ensures potential candidates undergo thorough recruitment checks before starting employment. This prevents unsuitable applicants from employment and keeps young people safe.

Young people live in a safe environment and take part in regular fire drills. All staff are trained in the fire procedures and are clear about action to take in the event of a fire. The home undertakes regular health and safety checks to maintain a safe environment. This means the home provides a safe place of residency.

## **Leadership and management**

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

The home is effectively and efficiently managed by a skilled and knowledgeable workforce that puts young people at the heart of what they do. Staff benefit from good supervision and training to meet their development needs, this ensures the quality of care young people receive is maximised.

The home continues to improve the quality of care for young people and acts on issues raised through Regulation 33 visits. Good practice is recognised and shared, this ensures good continuity of care, and as a result the home continues to provide a good service. There were no requirements or recommendations raised at the last inspection.

The provider meets the aims and objectives in the Statement of Purpose. Young people, staff and the placing authority are clear about the aims and objectives of the home and what services and facilities it provides. The home is well resourced to meet the needs of young people.

There is a pro-active approach by the management team that ensures the home is monitored and appropriate records signed as part of their quality assurance. Young people are consulted with where ever possible. There has been significant improvement in the level of progress young people have made despite their individual difficulties. Young people's aspirations are testament to the committed team who strive to support them regardless of faith, gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation.

Records are clear, up to date, stored correctly and contribute to an understanding of the child's life. All significant events relating to the protection of young people are promptly notified to the required authorities. Appropriate action is taken following any incident.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.