

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Michelle Bacon
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is privately owned and provides care and accommodation for one young person of either sex.

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 home provides highly personalised and well-planned care to meet the individual needs of young people. Young people have very positive views about the quality of their care and their relationships with staff. One young person rated the home between good and outstanding. One placing social worker commented: 'I can't knock them... it is clearly working for my young person.' Young people's views and opinions are taken into account in the running of the home and their care planning. Young people are making good progress from the starting point of their placement.

Young people state that they have a strong sense of feeling safe and are safe. They recognise and highly value the measures in place to protect them and help to keep them safe. Staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of the individual needs of the young people. Young people are developing their independence and social skills.

The home is managed effectively and the manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. Staff receive a good level of support and supervision. However, some areas for improvement have been identified which relate to the home's Statement of Purpose and young people's placement plans.

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
4 (2001)	ensure the home has a written statement of purpose which consists of all of the matters listed in Schedule 1. (Regulation 4 (1))	12/11/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure the home assists the child to put forward their views, wishes and feelings in the placement plan review process, and helps to ensure that these are fully taken into account. (NMS 25.4)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make good progress in the home. They are developing a positive self-view, building emotional resilience and being supported to gain an understanding of their background. Young people have developed interests and hobbies outside of the home, for example a keen interest in fishing and camping has led to a number of fishing trips with their friends and staff. As a result, young people's social interaction has improved as well as their self-confidence and self-esteem.

Young people understand their health needs, how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and make informed decisions about their own health. However, despite receiving advice and support on a range of health issues, including smoking cessation, some young people still choose to smoke. One young person did comment on the health benefits of drinking green tea. Young people benefit from attending their routine health appointments and make good progress in their self-care skills. For example, they take responsibility for their personal hygiene and getting themselves up for school in the mornings. As a result, young people make progress in developing the skills they will need in preparation for adult life.

Young people are engaged in education and are making progress with their attainment. Despite an unsettled period, young people recognise the importance of good attendance in securing the examination results they need to go on to further education. This means young people have aspirations for their future.

Young people benefit from appropriate contact with family and friends. Young people regularly use e-mail, social networking sites and their mobile telephones to maintain contact with family and friends. This means young people retain a strong sense of their individual identity.

Quality of care

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

Young people enjoy positive and constructive relationships with staff who provide a very supportive environment. One young person commented: 'This place is not bad at all, I'd like to stay here.' A placing social worker commented that her young person's behaviour had improved significantly and put this down to the support of the staff.

Comprehensive placement plans clearly identify the purpose of the placement and how the individual needs of young people will be met. Young people's progress is regularly reviewed to ensure their current needs are being met. Young people confirm they are consulted on their placement plans, however they do not contribute to them. The staff keep social workers up-to-date with any progress or concerns which means they are kept fully informed about a young person's placement.

Staff are proactive in supporting the educational achievements of young people. They have enlisted the support of young people's families to ensure they regularly attend school. One young person commented: 'It's tough love, but necessary.' There is good communication between home and school to ensure young people stay focused and reach their full potential.

The home has been very successful in engaging young people in developing new interests outside of the home. They have access to a range of health promotion information in the home, as well as access to health support agencies such as the looked after children's nurse. Young people are encouraged and supported to make positive choices in respect of their diet and exercise.

Young people contribute to the running of the home by attending young people's meetings and regular key worker sessions. They confirm they know how to make a complaint.

Young people live in a home that is decorated and furnished to a high standard.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people have a strong sense of feeling safe and are protected from harm. Staff are extremely clear about their role and responsibility to safeguard young people and are thoroughly trained in safeguarding. Young people do not routinely go missing from care. However, if they do, highly effective procedures are in place to ensure their safe return. This ensures young people's welfare is exceptionally well promoted and protected.

There have been significant improvements in young people's behaviour. Young people have developed more effective ways of managing their anger and as a result are taking responsibility for their actions. The home does not use physical intervention instead young people benefit from consistent boundaries. Young people respond extremely well to the use of incentives and rewards. One young person commented that they are saving their incentive money to buy a programme for their computer. As a result, young people feel highly valued and respected as individuals.

The home operates comprehensive safe recruitment and selection procedures to ensure young people are, as far as possible, only cared for by suitable people. One new member of staff has been recruited since the last inspection and all necessary checks were completed before they commenced employment at the home.

Young people live in an extremely physically safe environment. All fire, gas and electrical equipment is serviced annually. Young people take part in regular fire drills to help keep them safe in an emergency. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place that significantly help to reduce or eliminate risk to young people. The manager reviews these regularly to ensure they remain current.

Leadership and management

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

Young people live in a home that is managed by an experienced and qualified manager. The manager is also the Registered Manager of another home within the company. This means she is not in full time day-to-day charge of the home. However, the home has a qualified deputy manager who effectively deputises in the manager's absence.

The home has a detailed Statement of Purpose that clearly outlines the home's aims and objectives. However, the Statement of Purpose does not include all the matters required, as it does not detail the relevant experience of the provider, manager and staff.

Staff are well supported by the manager. They confirm the manager provides them with very good support and guidance. One member of staff commented: 'The manager and staff team are brilliant.' All existing staff are experienced and level 3 qualified in the care of children and young people. The home is committed to ensuring staff are well trained to ensure they have the skills to meet the needs of young people.

The one recommendation from the last inspection has been addressed. The home now has a development plan in place which identifies areas for development and improvement of the service.

The registered provider ensures monthly provider visits are undertaken. Young people and staff are able to meet with the visitor to discuss their views about their care. In addition, the visitor consults with placing authorities to gain their views and

opinions on the quality of care provided by the home. The manager also monitors matters in the home each month to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the young people and improve the quality of care provided.

Young people's records are stored securely and contribute to an understanding of their needs and progress. Any significant events are reported to the relevant authorities to ensure the welfare of young people is protected.

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.