Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Michelle Spruce
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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 aged between 10 and 17 years with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Overall effectiveness

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

This is a good home with some outstanding features. The staff take full account of the individual needs of young people and provide effective, personalised and well-planned care. The home actively promotes positive outcomes for young people. The home works hard to support transition into adult care and young people receive tailored care packages to work towards independence. All staff are well trained and experienced to meet the diverse needs of young people. The staff work hard to ensure young people receive effective healthcare and assessment through providing direct access to support services necessary in maintaining young people's health and well-being. Staff provide a warm and welcoming environment in which young people feel safe. The staff are a real strength in the home and young people are provided with good role models that encourage, support and praise development in all aspect of the young people's lives. The relationships are strong and are built on trust and respect. Young people feel the care they receive is good and the support they have is tailored to individual's needs.

Areas for improvement

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make outstanding progress educationally, socially and emotionally. This is a result of the individualised placement planning tailored to meet their needs. For example, young people are fully supported in maximising their independence skills and opportunities to access social activities off site are provided and fully supported. Staff are proactive and fully support young people to attend their education provisions. Although young people are at different stages within their education, they have made significant progress and achievement from their starting point. Young people have made outstanding progress in achieving positive results within their education. Where difficulties arise staff work hard to encourage and support young people to maintain a focus on succeeding in their attainment and achievement. Their achievements are actively recognised and supported by the staff and as a result young people have made exceptional progress in reaching their goals. For example, young people who have struggled to maintain education attendance have improved their skills and knowledge by accessing alternative education

provision.

Young people are confident and have aspirations to succeed in their life. They make exceptional progress to develop a positive self view and are supported to make informed choices through regular meetings. Young people take care in their appearance and are well presented. They are encouraged to develop self awareness in regards to good personal hygiene. This helps to increase young people's self-esteem and self-image.

Young people's health including physical, emotional, and psychological health is actively supported. Young people benefit from having access to a range of services including doctors, dentist, opticians and sexual health clinics. Staff assist young people, where necessary, in arranging appointments, this helps young people to maintain healthy lifestyles. Young people plan and prepare menus that reflect a well-balanced healthy diet. They are encouraged to prepare and cook meals. This assists young people to take responsibility for their own health and well-being.

Young people strive for independence which is fully supported by staff. Staff have in-depth knowledge and a clear understanding of the complex individual needs of young people receiving their care. As a result young people feel empowered to take responsibility for their own life and actively seek to develop life skills for transition to leaving care. For example, young people have developed skills in gardening as a direct result of accessing alternative education providing this resource. This has led to engaging with the local community by helping neighbours with general gardening tasks. As a result good relationships are built and maintained. Young people are very confident about making transitions into adulthood and openly express and show their ability to reach this goal.

Young people benefit from appropriate contact with family, friends and other people who are significant to them. The home fully engages with young people and supports them to maintain contact with family and friends. This helps re-establish meaningful contact with people who are important to them. As a result, young people preserve their important relationships. The welfare of young people is at the heart of staff care practice. Young people receive exceptional support to identify how they feel about what has happened to them and what they want to achieve in the future.

Quality of care

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

The quality of care young people receive is good. Young people benefit from a strong staff team who are pro-active and enthusiastic about the service they provide. The relationships between staff and young people are strong and staff are consistently concerned with their welfare. As a result trust and respect is built which positively impacts upon the dynamics of the home. There is effective communication with young people and staff provide a range of opportunities for young people to express their views. For example, a young person expressed an interest to move to another home within the service, this was successful following extensive discussion with all

parties involved. As a result young people feel their views and wishes are listened to and they are taken seriously. The home provides a detailed policy and procedure which enables young people to make complaints. Young people say they know how to complain. There is also a young people's guide that details clearly how complaints or grumbles should be raised. As a result of the positive relationships staff have with young people no formal complaints have been raised.

Staff provide concise and effective care which reflects the placement plans tailored to the individual needs of young people. Young people say they are involved in planning their care and comment, 'it's about me'. Pathway plans are comprehensive and detailed in providing a clear indication of transition to adult life.

The home provides good support to young people that ensures their health and well-being is maintained. Young people access services to support and meet their needs both physically, emotionally and psychologically. Routine appointments to the dentist, doctors and opticians are attended and young people attend either with or without support allowing them to take responsibility for their own health. This means young people remain well balanced in all aspects of their health. Staff encourage young people to be actively involved in the planning, shopping and cooking of their own meals. Young people are confident and self sufficient and take their dietary requirements into consideration. For example, young people grow their own fruit and vegetables and use these to prepare and eat their own healthy meals.

Young people receive committed support from the home and as a result achieve good results in attendance and achievement within their education placement. Young people benefit from further education placements that meet each individual's needs through good communication and planning supported by the staff. For example, one young person chose to take part in voluntary work and also benefitted from a twelve- week course which enabled a range of experience. As a result young people's experiences provide better opportunities to develop their skills and support chances to engage in their chosen careers.

Staff treat young people with dignity and respect regardless of their culture, race, religion, gender or disability. Young people are supported taking in to consideration their individual needs. Young people feel equally treated and staff help young people to recognise how to treat others with respect while recognising the diversity and difference in other people.

The home provides a warm and friendly environment which is designed and suitably located for young people to access a range of services to meet their needs. Young people take part in both in-house and off-site activities of their choice which are relaxing and physically challenging. Staff continually encourage activities to stimulate and motivate young people while enabling them to access the community in which they reside. Young people develop social skills and benefit from experiences which increase their self esteem and confidence.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

The home provides a safe environment and young people say they are safe. Although the home has robust and clear plans for when young people go missing this rarely occurs. Young people have gained trust and respect between the staff and themselves which means they have no reason to go missing. As a result young people are protected from harm.

Young people are safeguarded in the home and staff support their safety with detailed risk assessments for activities, the premises and young people themselves. These identify risk and outline strategies to minimise them. Behaviour management plans provide clear sanctions and reward measures to encourage acceptable behaviour. This allows young people to understand boundaries. As a result there is fair and consistent approach to managing behaviour. Young people respond well to these measures and physical intervention is not used.

Staff receive training in safeguarding and are skilled and knowledgeable in the processes to protect young people. Staff place the safety and well-being of young people at the heart of the care they provide and young people feel confident in the fact that the home they live in feels safe and secure. Staff undergo a thorough recruitment vetting process before beginning employment. All relevant safety checks are undertaken to ensure there is no potential threat or risk to young people placed. This protects young people from abuse.

The home undertakes regular health and safety monitoring to ensure it remains a safe place to live. Young people actively take part in fire drills which means they receive sufficient support in how to appropriately respond in an emergency.

Leadership and management

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

The home benefits from a dedicated staff team led by an enthusiastic and motivated manager. There are some processes however in the home that do not reflect the home's policy and procedure. For example, medication is not stored as stated in the home's procedure and creams have no date recorded when opened making it difficult to know when the shelf life has expired. However, the manager has been pro-active in addressing this issue with the staff team during a team meeting held recently and no direct harm has occurred as a result. There are new medication administration record sheets in place to make the recording easier and clearer for staff to document.

Staff are supported by the manager and receive a broad range of training to meet their individual development. The management and senior staff provide regular supervision to ensure staff are appropriately supported in providing a high standard of care. Team meetings take place on a regular basis and staff are fully aware of the plans for the home's future prospects. This ensures staff are up-to-date with current affairs and changes impacting or affecting the service.

The home is monitored and visited by the independent visitor. The visits are regular and provide a detailed report of the home. The manager reviews and takes appropriate action in addressing shortfalls to improve practice. This ensures the quality of service delivered remains robust. Young people are actively involved in providing their feedback during the monitoring visits. As a result the home continues to meet their individual needs. Staffing levels are good and staff say they feel valued by the manager who is always there for them. One staff member comments, 'the manager is brilliant, she will always go above and beyond. She really cares and you can trust her. She is pro-active and will listen to us.'

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.