

## Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC392549        |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 26/06/2012      |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Dennis Bradley  |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Full            |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home |

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| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 28/03/2012 |
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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for three children with emotional and behavioural problems. The home is owned and operated by a private provider.

### 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**.

Overall this home provides a good quality of care and staff promote improved outcomes for the young people.

Young people receive excellent, personalised support from staff to meet their individual needs and benefit from having personalised care plans and risk assessments. Staff actively seek, and take into account, young people's wishes and feelings about how they should be cared for. Young people feel safe and staff are good at promoting and safeguarding their welfare.

Staff work closely with other professionals and agencies to ensure young people can access a good range of opportunities and resources. They actively encourage and support young people to develop and achieve and young people are making good progress.

The management team ensures the home is managed efficiently and effectively. They understand the home's strengths and areas for development and the staff team as a whole are committed to developing the service to improve outcomes for young people.

There are three shortfalls relating to the home's records and support for staff which have minimal impact on the welfare of young people.

## Areas for improvement

## Recommendations

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

- ensure young people's placement plans focus on clear measurable outcomes (NMS 2.3)
- ensure the home has a suitable record of the recruitment and vetting checks which have been carried out on staff (NMS 16.3)
- ensure staff are provided with regular supervision, in particular at the frequency specified in the home's Statement of Purpose. Ensure a suitable record is kept of each supervision held for each member of staff. (NMS 19.4 and 19.5)

## Outcomes for children and young people

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

Outcomes for young people are very good and they are making progress in all aspects of their lives. They have very good relationships with staff and are confident and self-assured. The social worker for one young person said they have made 'excellent progress' while living at the home.

Young people receive very good support to attend school and complete their education and they are making good progress in this respect. They are also encouraged and supported to engage in a wide range of positive activities within the local community, as well as activities which help them acquire skills they will need as adults.

Young people have good opportunities to participate in decisions about their day-to-day lives and future. Staff are proactive in trying to find the best way to promote their participation, for example in contributing to their personal care plans and risk assessments. Young people also receive appropriate support to enable them to gain an understanding of their individual circumstances and backgrounds.

Young people are healthy and benefit from having access to good advice and support on health and personal care issues. They are encouraged to take appropriate responsibility for their own health. Young people also receive good support and guidance about how to stop engaging in risky behaviours and are making good progress in this regard.

Young people benefit from appropriate contact with family members and friends and staff actively support this. This enables young people to maintain links with people who are important to them.

## Quality of care

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

Young people benefit from the excellent care and support provided by staff and they are making exceptionally good progress.

Young people know how to make a complaint if they are unhappy about something and feel staff take their views and opinions seriously.

Staff are exceptionally good at supporting young people to attend school and achieve. They advocate on behalf of young people to ensure they have an appropriate educational placement. They also maintain very regular contact with schools which enables them to address any day-to-day issues quickly. This supports young people's continuing attendance and achievement. Staff also celebrate young people's achievements and progress which helps promote their self-esteem and confidence. Young people have made exceptional progress at school from their starting points when they moved into the home.

Young people benefit from having individual placement plans that detail how their needs will be addressed. Staff have a very good understanding of the young people's needs and backgrounds and they ensure they are cared for in line with their placement plans. Young people are encouraged to play an active role in the development and review of their plans. However, placement plans do not always identify clear measureable outcomes for each young person.

Where appropriate, staff work closely and constructively with parents. This helps to ensure continuity of care and good outcomes for young people. Staff also work exceptionally well with social workers and other professionals to make sure young people's plans are implemented consistently. The social worker for one young person said the way staff had worked with them and the young person's parents had been 'vital' to the success of the placement.

Staff are exceptionally child focussed in their practice and they have a very positive view of young people. They place a strong value on making positive relationships with young people and making sure they are listened to and respected. Young people are actively involved in decisions about the running of the home.

Staff endeavour to work constructively to reduce the incidences of negative behaviour displayed by the young people. The young people have made significant progress in this regard. A social worker said staff are 'creative in how they use different strategies with young people' to enable them to achieve this progress.

There are good arrangements for storing, administering and monitoring the young people's medication which help protect their health and meet their health care needs. Young people benefit from the very good links the home has with a range of health care services. Also, some of the staff had specific training in how to support and promote young people's health and wellbeing.

Young people benefit from living in an environment that is comfortable, homely and meets their needs. The house is decorated and furnished to a high standard and its

location provides a safe setting for young people.

### **Safeguarding children and young people**

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

Staff are good at protecting young people's welfare by implementing the home's safeguarding procedures, risk assessments and reporting procedures. Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in keeping young people safe and take appropriate action to safeguard young people. Young people said they felt safe living at the home.

Staff have had training in countering bullying behaviour and the home has received anti-bullying accreditation. They are robust and proactive in dealing with any incidents of bullying.

Staff have good working relationships with the police and the home has an agreed protocol to follow if young people go missing. There have been no incidents involving young people going missing for nearly two years.

Staff are very good at supporting young people to develop positive behaviour and social skills. They agree appropriate targets and incentives with each young person. Staff use sanctions sparingly and these are relevant and reasonable and, where possible, agreed with the young people concerned. There have been no incidents where staff have used physical restraint on young people since the last full inspection.

The home has clear and comprehensive staff recruitment and selection procedures. These help make sure only suitable people are employed to care for the young people. However, the home does not always maintain a sufficiently comprehensive record to demonstrate staff have undergone robust recruitment and vetting checks.

Young people live in a home that is safe and secure. For example, staff and young people take part in regular fire drills and there are good systems to enable staff to identify and minimise any risks or hazards.

### **Leadership and management**

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

The home has a Statement of Purpose that provides clear, accessible information about how it operates. It is child focused and clearly sets out how young people will be cared for. There is also a young people's guide to the home which tells them what it is like. It also includes important information, such as how to complain or contact an independent advocate.

The management team provide good and effective leadership for the staff team. They ensure the home has a clear ethos and staff work with commonly understood

objectives. The management team continually monitor and review the quality of care provided by the service and they have a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. They are committed to improving the service to young people and have a clear development plan for the home. For example, recent improvements have been made to how young people are consulted about their care and the running of the home. Action has also been taken to improve staff handovers between shifts.

There were no requirements or recommendations made at the last inspection but the home took effective action to address those from the previous inspection.

All staff either have a relevant qualification or are undertaking training to obtain one. Many of the staff are also very experienced in caring for young people. Staff are committed to meeting the diverse needs of the young people and strive to promote good outcomes for them. They have access to good training opportunities in caring for children and young people. However, some staff do not receive formal supervision once a month as specified in the home's Statement of Purpose. Also, staff do not always record the length of each supervision session that is held.

Staffing levels are good and enable staff to spend time meeting the individual needs of the young people. Staff and young people are actively involved in the local community and the home has good relationships with its neighbours.

## 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.