

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC397112
Inspection date	13/12/2012
Inspector	Michelle Bacon
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	14/02/2012
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2012

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is one of a number owned and managed by a private organisation. It provides care for up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

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**.

This is a very good home with some outstanding features. Young people make very good progress in relation to their starting points across all aspects of their welfare and development. The impact the home has had in supporting this progress is clearly evident. Care planning and practice are highly personalised to meet the individual needs of each young person. One young person commented: 'I feel well cared for and it's really well run.' Another said: 'It's alright here, the staff help you with lots of things.'

Young people say they feel safe and are kept safe. While young people understand there are risk assessments in place to help protect them, one young person commented these can feel restrictive at times. Young people agree that they get on well with each other most of the time, but on occasions there has been some bullying. They confirm staff deal with this effectively.

The manager consistently communicates high expectations to the staff. She makes good use of monitoring activities to improve outcomes for young people. However, there are some shortfalls with regards to the monitoring of records relating to medication and restraints. Most staff have undertaken training in physical intervention, however a newly appointed member of staff has not completed this yet.

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
21 (2001)	ensure there are suitable arrangements for the recording, handling, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of any medicine received into the children's home (Regulation 21)	15/01/2013
17B (2001)	ensure where a measure of restraint is used on a young person the records clearly record the details of the young person's behaviour leading to the use of the restraint. (Regulation 17B(3)(b))	15/01/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure the staff encourage young people to take appropriate risks as a part of normal growing up (NMS 4.4)
- ensure staff are trained in the use of physical restraint and this training is regularly refreshed. (NMS 3.15)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people are making excellent progress from their starting point at placement. Most young people benefit from placement stability and as a result they feel very settled and secure. They are making significant progress in their behaviour, education and emotional resilience. Staff have introduced life story books to help young people understand more about their backgrounds and build a picture of their lives and experiences.

Young people are healthy and understand the importance of healthy living. They follow a healthy diet and are fully involved in menu planning. In addition, some of the young people, with the support of staff, have grown their own vegetables. They attend their routine health appointments and receive appropriate support when they are feeling unwell. In addition, they regularly take part in sporting activities, such as the gym, dance, badminton and golf to keep them fit and healthy.

All young people are engaged in education and they have excellent attendance. School reports highlight the excellent progress they are making, with some young

people achieving a number of national qualifications. One young person is looking forward to their skiing trip with school. This ensures young people view their education as a positive part of their life.

Young people benefit from very well planned and supported contact with their families. Family and friends are very welcome at the home. This means young people have a strong sense of identity because of these relationships. Furthermore, young people are encouraged to take part in community activities, such as dance, sea and fire cadets. This means young people's social skills and self-confidence have improved.

Young people are being very well prepared for independent living, appropriate to their age. They are routinely involved in completing household tasks, such as shopping, cooking, budgeting and doing their own laundry. This increases young people's ability to take care of themselves.

Quality of care

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

Young people benefit from very positive and supportive relationships with the staff, who are very aware of young people's individual needs. The manager and staff are extremely committed to delivering a high standard of care. Young people say they feel very supported and can talk to staff. As a result, they are thriving in a nurturing and supportive environment.

Young people have an influence in the day-to-day running of the home. For example, in menu choices, activities and holidays, and how their bedrooms are decorated. In addition, their views and opinions are taken into account in staff appraisals. As a result, young people feel valued and well respected. All young people know how to complain because they are provided with good information about this. Furthermore, some young people have access to an independent visitor which means they have someone independent of the home to talk to should they wish to raise a concern about their care.

Comprehensive placement plans contribute to the day-to-day care arrangements in the home, which means young people are well cared for in line with their plans. Young people's plans are reviewed regularly to ensure they continue to make good progress. Staff are proactive in working with families, social workers and other agencies to promote young people's welfare.

The home provides young people with sound health care by ensuring they can access the services they may need. The looked after children's nurse visits the home every month and provides young people with advice and guidance on health related issues. All staff are trained in the safe administration of medication. However, the medication procedures are not robustly applied: despite medication being stored securely, some medication was missing and the staff could not account for it.

Staff are very proactive and consistent in promoting regular attendance at school. Some young people attend the provider's school while others go to local mainstream schools. Staff attend daily with some young people to support their educational placements.

Young people live in a home that provides a very high standard of accommodation. Young people take pride in and ownership of their environment because they have been fully involved in the choice of furnishings and decor. The home is made even more homely by photographs of the young people being displayed around the house, as well as their art work.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people in the home confirm that they are safe and feel safe. Staff are very clear about their role and responsibility to safeguard young people. High staffing levels provide good supervision. However, one young person commented there has been some occasional bullying but that staff deal with this effectively. As a result, they feel protected.

Young people do not routinely go missing from care. However, if they do procedures are in place to ensure their safe return. Comprehensive risk assessments identify any specific risk-taking behaviours and these assessments are regularly reviewed as risk levels change. While young people understand these risk assessments are in place to help protect them, one young person commented that they can feel restrictive at times.

Positive behaviour is encouraged with the use of rewards and incentives. When negative behaviour occurs, suitable sanctions are used. The number of restraints has reduced over time. Staff are trained in behaviour management, including the appropriate use of restraint. Incidents of restraint are generally well recorded, though some records lacked the detail needed to gather a full account. For example, the behaviour leading to the restraint is not clearly specified.

Young people are protected, as far as possible, by safe recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure they are only cared for by suitable people. In addition, young people live in a physically safe environment because of robust health and safety procedures. Gas and electrical equipment is serviced annually. Regular fire drills ensure young people and staff know how to evacuate the building safely in the event of an emergency.

Leadership and management

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

Young people live in a home that is effectively and efficiently managed by an experienced and qualified Registered Manager. She provides good leadership and

strives to improve the quality of care for the young people. The one recommendation from the last inspection has been addressed: the manager now monitors all sanctions for their effectiveness, which means there is proper oversight of the impact a sanction has had on a young person's behaviour.

The home meets the aims and objectives of its Statement of Purpose. This means young people, placing authorities and parents are clear about the service provided and the support young people can expect to receive.

Staff are well supported and receive regular supervision. They have a range of skills and experience to meet the needs of the young people. Staff benefit from having their training needs identified and there is a training programme in place that enables them to enhance their skills and knowledge. New members of staff are currently working towards the level 3 Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma. However, one member of staff has not completed restraint and behaviour management training, and a number of staff are in need of refresher training to update their skills.

Monthly monitoring and registered provider visits are respectively completed by the manager and an external manager of the organisation. Feedback from young people and their social workers is regularly sought to help improve the quality of care. The progress young people make is evidence of the commitment of the manager and staff to providing a high standard of care.

Young people's records are well maintained overall and stored securely. All information is up-to-date and provides a comprehensive picture of a young person's time at the home. All significant events are notified to the relevant authorities, to ensure the welfare and safety of young people is further 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* and the evaluation schedule for children's homes.