

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC399586
Inspection date	16/04/2013
Inspector	Robert Curr
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	10/01/2013
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2013

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 privately owned home is registered to provide care for up to two young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties and/or with learning disabilities.

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 a good quality of care with great attention to individualised care planning for all young people. Young people receive personalised care that ensures their significant health needs and learning disabilities are met. At the same time, the home is committed to treating the young people appropriate to their age, regardless of their complex needs. Young people make good progress while living at the home. Young people that have recently left the home have achieved positive outcomes because of the direct input of the care they receive at the home.

The home constantly seeks the views of stakeholders, as well as using information provided by young people and their parents, to ensure it is providing a good service. The staff team are very proficient at interpreting the communication signs and behaviour of young people beyond their verbal abilities, to ensure they are included in their lifestyle choices.

Young people have a very strong relationship with the staff team and benefit from their time with their peer group. Young people develop their social interaction skills and build confidence while being around others at the home. Young people are well supported by staff to regularly engage in meaningful and stimulating activities to promote their development.

Overall the home is managed to a good standard. The staff are well led and maintain high professional standards. Improvements have been made to the monitoring and controlling of the activities of the home by the registered provider. The senior management team use a clear development plan. This plan highlights any

discrepancies made against the Statement of Purpose along with recognising progress.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the staff continue in attempting to gain a minimum level 3 qualification. (NMS 18.5)

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people make good progress to develop their skills and confidence. They also access a wide range of experiences through living at the home, including youth clubs, work experience and camping trips. Young people are happy during their stay at the home and people who know them well comment 'You can tell by the look on their faces they love being here.'

Young people enjoy good relationship with their peers. They access a wide range of stimulating opportunities to promote their development that may not be available to them otherwise. Young people that use verbal communication say how much they enjoy living at the home.

Young people receive excellent levels of support from staff to ensure they maintain regular attendance at school and college. Young people also receive good opportunities to complete homework and continue their school work at home. Good communication procedures are in place between schools, families and the home to ensure the young people receive consistent support with their learning and self-development.

Young people are involved in worthwhile activities in the community and enjoy going on outings from the home. This helps to build their self-confidence and develop their practical skills away from a managed environment.

Young people make great progress in their development and acquire social interaction skills as a direct consequence of living at the home.

Quality of care

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

Staff effectively promote the enjoyment of young people living here and demonstrate excellent interaction skills to engage the young people at all times. Staff have a very

good understanding of the communication abilities of the young people. They efficiently interpret the young people's communication to enable them to make their own choices. Young people enjoy living in the home and behave appropriately. They develop genuine friendships with their peers and thrive on the high level of support provided.

Comprehensive care plans are in place that are tailored to the needs of individual young people and ensure the diverse needs of the young people are met. Meticulous care planning ensures the welfare and safety of the young people is met; with particular attention paid to any complex health needs. This means that young people are comfortable and safe.

Young people are able to voice their concerns using either the home's complaint system or family members. The wishes of young people significantly influence the running of the home. They have a huge input into the resources available for them to use while staying at the home. Regular communication takes place with parents and carers to ensure that the young people are happy. This ensures that the views of young people are constantly considered and that it is a child-led service.

Healthy eating is encouraged and young people say they enjoy the food that they eat, and often cook for themselves. All young people are included in the mealtime routine at the home and sit around a table together. This is an example of all young people being treated in an inclusive manner.

Young people take part in an extensive range of activities and interests. The home provides a homely, fun and stimulating environment for the young people to enjoy. Young people especially enjoy the quiet room and play equipment in the garden. Staff will also engage young people in calmer activities, for example art and crafts. Their accomplishments are celebrated within the home and many photographs are on display for all to see. This means the young people stay in a home that is both homely and suitable for their needs.

Staff work positively with other professionals to ensure good outcomes for young people. Staff communicate regularly with health specialists to ensure they are up to date with the health care and techniques needed for each young person. This ensures young people are looked after using current health practice and also provides continuity of care for them.

The arrangements for storing and administering medication are sound. Young people have good access to local health services and arrange for the collection of their own prescriptions. As a result, young people receive the medical treatment they require.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people say that they feel safe and very much enjoy living at the home. Parents and carers feel totally confident and reassured that their child is in this

home. Incidents of bullying are rare. The home manages the dynamics of the group to ensure young people's behaviour does not perturb others. Consequently, young people enjoy a settled, happy atmosphere where they feel comfortable to interact with others and express themselves.

Care plans clearly detail the behaviour management for each young person in an individualised and positive support plan. This is agreed with children's parents and social workers to ensure collaborative and transparent working practices.

There are no incidents of young people going missing from the home. Staff follow positive and proactive behaviour management strategies throughout and seek to engage and enthuse the young people at all times. There are no restrictive physical interventions used at the home. Young people are not at risk of harm and do not engage in damaging, risk-taking behaviour.

The environment is physically safe and has appropriate security, taking into account the needs and characteristics of the young people. Staffing levels are agreed and adhered to and frequent visual monitoring is in place to ensure young people are safe. All the necessary environmental safety checks for the building are in place. The home practises regular fire evacuation procedures and young people are able to describe what to do in the event of an emergency.

All staff working with the young people are carefully selected and vetted to help prevent unsuitable people being exposed to young people. No agency staff are used and all staff working at the home are suitably trained and qualified to work with young people with learning disabilities.

Leadership and management

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

The home has a highly experienced, permanent Registered Manager. The home is managed effectively and delivers a service which meets the needs of the young people. There are clear lines of responsibility and delegation at all times. Parents and placing authorities say the Registered Manager does a 'great job' and the staff team 'go above and beyond what one would expect'. As a result, the young people are looked after by an experienced and well balanced staff team who can support their complex needs.

The home meets its stated aim to ensure all young people using the service are treated as young people first, irrespective of any additional disability or difficulty, and as unique and valued individuals in their own right. The home makes good use of its development plan and gathers the views of parents and social workers to feed into improvements in the service.

The home has a good relationship with its neighbours and the local community. The Registered Manager has forged good links with the local schools to make good use of some of their available resources. This means young people at the home will benefit

from a non-prejudicial point of view within the local area, as the community has a good understanding of what the service is providing for the young people.

Monitoring of the home is adequately carried out. This has begun to include consultation with young people and other stakeholders and provides an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the service.

Staff receive regular supervision of good quality and frequent opportunities to ensure their individual training needs are met. A number of staff have attained a level 3 qualification. All other staff are about to complete their diploma. This means staff are guided to fulfil their role properly and young people are looked after by a well-trained and knowledgeable staff team.

The Registered Manager ensures the home is well resourced to suit the needs of the young people. Records at the home are kept to a high standard. For example, they provide a precise and clear understanding of a young person's life, their experiences and plans for the future. This means the records staff have to follow are informative and provide an accurate depiction of the care required by young people.

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 the inspection of children's homes.