

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Suzanne Young
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home accommodates up to three young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is run by a private company.

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 good home as young people are making good progress in relation to their starting points. Care planning is personalised to meet the needs of each young person in the home. As a result, the home impacts positively on young people's lives.

Staff promote positive behaviour with young people. This results in low instances of negative behaviour which require the use of physical interventions. Young people feel safe and have developed good quality relationships with staff. Placing social workers and parents also have a positive working relationship with the home.

Young people do not generally go missing from the home. Since the last inspection, however, there has been an increase of missing events from one young person, resulting in a high level of police involvement with the home. This has significantly reduced following the termination of the placement.

The manager understands the strengths and weakness of the home and has established systems in place to monitor and review the quality of care to young people. These inform practice and are instrumental in driving improvement which improves the outcomes for young people.

The home is well maintained. It is comfortable and warm. Young people are able to significantly influence the running of the home and the delivery of their care.

As a result of this inspection, one requirement and two recommendations have been made. These are in regard to records and risk assessments.

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
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of restraint a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose which includes the duration of the measure of restraint. (Regulation 17B (4)(a))	31/12/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure the children's guide includes a summary of what the home sets out to do for children to ensure they are clear about the aims and objectives of the home and what services and facilities it provides (NMS 13.5)
- ensure risk assessments carried out of the children home environment are recorded in writing and understood by staff to ensure children's health and safety is promoted. (NMS 10.8)

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people achieve good progress in all areas of their development. They develop good relationships with the manager and staff in the home. Staff support them to make significant progress in developing a positive self-view. As a result, young people grow in confidence and self-esteem. One professional working with the young people stated, 'I have seen a real improvement in the time I have been visiting.'

Young people are making good progress in their education. Young people who have previously had poor school attendance are receiving education and attending regularly. There are no young people currently living in the home over the age of 16 who require a pathway plan. Young people, however, develop independence skills appropriate to their age and abilities. When young people near the age of 16 they start working through a life skills and leaving care plan with staff to help prepare them for independent living. As a result, young people are well prepared for adulthood.

Young people are in good health and are beginning to take responsibility for their own health. They attend primary health care appointments in a timely manner and access the company's in-house therapy team for specialist support when required. Young people are becoming aware of how to keep themselves healthy through key worker sessions and support from staff. As a result, young people are leading healthier lifestyles. For instance, their diet improves and risk-taking behaviours reduce.

Young people are encouraged to make a positive contribution to their home. They regularly attend house meetings and contribute to the running of the home through planning activities and meals. Young people are able to personalise their bedrooms and have a say in the décor of living areas in the home. For instance, young people have recently designed and re decorated their study room in the home. Young people are also encouraged to join clubs and regularly attend leisure activities in the local community.

Quality of care

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

Young people enjoy positive and constructive relationships with the manager and staff in the home. One young person commented 'I like living in the home and have been here the longest I have been anywhere.' As a result young people feel secure and are aware that staff are concerned about their well-being and development. Young people are aware of how to complain if they are unhappy about any aspect of their care. No complaints have been made since the last inspection.

Staff actively promote the education and health of young people. The home supports the education of young people alongside the company's residential school through a 24 hour curriculum. Staff engage daily with the school and successfully promote young people's attendance. Staff also work alongside the in-house therapy team to ensure young people get the treatment and support that they need.

Care planning is good. Impact assessments are conducted for all young people prior to moving into the home. This ensures the interests of existing young people living in the home are taken into account when considering new admissions to the home. Where the admission is planned, young people, parents and placing social workers are involved and consulted. This helps young people to be fully prepared for moving into the home. The home only admits young people whose presenting behaviour they consider they can meet on admission and takes action to re-establish the group dynamics when different behaviour is presented.

The home provides young people with a good level of personalised care. Young people's diverse needs are strongly identified within care planning. Individual placement plans are tailored to meet the specific needs of each young person. These are of a good quality and clearly identify objectives and risk. Individualised behavioural strategies are also developed which enable staff to deal appropriately with young people's behaviours. This gives staff a clear direction in which to work

with young people. Staff endeavour to involve young people in their care. Young people sign their placement plans and can access their personal file whenever they wish. This helps young people to become engaged and committed to the care being provided for them.

Equality and diversity issues are positively addressed in daily living through theme nights where staff and young people pick a country and research the religion and culture of the country. This helps promote a positive awareness of other cultures.

Young people live in a home which is warm, comfortable and well maintained. The décor and furnishings are of a high standard. All young people have their own en-suite bedrooms which they can personalise to their own tastes.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Staff are proactive in ensuring young people are safe and actively intervene if instances of bullying occur. Young people say they feel safe living in the home. They feel staff would listen and respond quickly to any concerns they may have. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and are aware of how to access the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. This means they have a good understanding of the action to take should they have any concerns about a young person's safety or well-being.

Placement plans are individualised and identify any risks to young people. They are linked to comprehensive risk assessments which support the risk-taking activities of young people. All staff read young people's risk assessments to ensure they have a good knowledge of each young person and the strategies to employ in managing their behaviour.

Staff develop strong and trusting relationships with young people. This promotes positive behaviour and as a result there are few instances of physical restraint. Any restraint used by staff is detailed in the young person's behaviour management guidance plan. Records of restraints, however, are not being fully completed as the duration of some restraints is not recorded.

Since the last inspection the instances of young people going missing from the home have been high as a result of one young person frequently running away. The manager worked very closely with the police, placing authority and safeguarding team to help minimise the risk. The young person is no longer living at the home because the manager recognised that the home was not able to meet the young person's needs or keep him safe.

The home is physically safe and secure. There are clear procedures for the recruitment of staff which prevents unsuitable people from being recruited. Fire equipment checks are completed appropriately. Young people participate in regular fire drills to ensure they can evacuate the home in an emergency. Environmental risk

assessments are conducted and regularly reviewed. Relief staff, however, do not read the risk assessment specific to the home to ensure they are aware of the risks around the home. This could potentially compromise safety.

Leadership and management

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

The home is well managed. The manager is experienced and committed to providing good quality care for young people. Development plans are in place and are reviewed on a monthly basis. The manager regularly monitors the activities of the home to ensure continued good quality of care is maintained. As a result the manager understands the strengths and weakness of the home to inform practice and drive improvement. The home is currently converting an annex previously used by the in-house therapy team into living accommodation for one young person.

The home is meeting the aims and objectives of the Statement of Purpose which gives clear information for placing social workers and parents. The young people's welcome booklet, however, is a corporate document which does not relate specifically to the home. As a result, young people may not have a clear understanding and expectations of the home they are to live in.

The requirement made at the last inspection has been met. The views of young people and others are now spoken with by the independent visitor during the monthly monitoring visits.

The home employs a sufficient number of staff to meet the needs of the young people. All young people require one-one staffing levels. Staff are qualified and receive a good level of training to meet the needs of the young people living in the home. They are well supported through regular supervision and staff meetings. This ensures staff are up to date with legislative developments and able to meet the needs of young people in the home.

Placing social workers, independent reviewing officers and parents are complementary about the way the manager and staff work with them to ensure good quality of care is provided to the young people in the home. One independent reviewing officer stated, 'I have no concerns or any issues with communication from the home. I always feel in looked after children (LAC) reviews that people work together well'. Others have commented the home is, 'Terrific' and 'Ticks all the right boxes'.

Young people's records are clear and concise. They demonstrate young people's development and progress and are well recorded and contribute to an understanding of their life.

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.