

## Inspection report for children's home

---

|                                |                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC407430        |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 24/09/2013      |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Thomas Webber   |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Full            |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home |

---

|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 29/11/2012 |
|--------------------------------|------------|

---

© Crown copyright 2013

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 registered to provide care and accommodation 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**.

Overall the home provides young people with a good quality of care. The manager provides positive leadership and as a result the care practices within the home are effective. These support young people to thrive and make good progress in various aspects of their lives. As a result, the quality of care supports young people to achieve improved outcomes.

The staff team are very committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for young people, socially, emotionally and educationally. Young people feel safe living at the home and are very appreciative of the care and support they receive. Strong and effective relationships are being forged between the staff and young people where they continue to thrive within a warm, caring, nurturing and supportive environment.

## 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   |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 33<br>(2001) | ensure that the person carrying out the external monitoring visits, interviews, with their consent and in private, such of the | 31/10/2013 |

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                |  |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
|  | children accommodated there in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home. These visits should take place when young people are in residence. (Regulation 33(4)(a)) |  |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|

## Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people benefit from living in a structured environment where there are clear boundaries and expectations. Young people receive a good level of personal care and support and are beginning to thrive in a caring and nurturing environment. Warm and positive relationships exist between staff and young people which assists them to develop and make good progress in various aspects of their lives.

Young people are fully supported to gain a better understanding of their past behaviours and are assisted to make positive changes. They are also supported to reflect on their actions, which assists them to develop in confidence and improve their self-esteem by understanding the effect of the positive decisions they make. The staff encourage young people to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The health care needs of young people are fully met with specialist help being provided to assist them where needed. They receive a varied and balanced diet and are provided with alternatives where necessary. They spoke positively about the quality and quantity of food provided.

Young people are involved in developing some independent living skills. These include some decorating, undertaking their own laundry, keeping their rooms clean and tidy and learning to use public transport. Young people are given every opportunity to take part in a range of activities including fishing, archery and go karting. There are a range of activity rooms within the home where they engage in additional activities such as art. Young people are fully consulted in this process. Young people are encouraged and supported to attend their educational placement, within the confines of their ability to sustain attendance. This enables young people to improve their attitude towards school and in turn provides the basis for them to achieve success in this area.

The staff support young people to maintain the agreed level of contact with their respective families. Staff actively support and supervise family visits and ensure that these run smoothly. As a result the level of family contact has increased. Families, where appropriate, and the respective placing authorities are kept fully up to date with regard to the care and progress of young people. Social workers spoke extremely positively about the level of care and communication maintained. They are very pleased with the placements feeling that the staff within the home have worked extremely hard with the young people to ensure that they are happy at the home.

## Quality of care

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

The quality of the care is good.

Young people receive a good level of personal care and support with warm and positive relationships existing between them and staff. This assists young people to develop and make good progress socially, educationally and emotionally. Young people spoke very positively about the care, support and services they receive. They also commented very positively about their overall experience of living at the home. Detailed placement plans are well established for young people. These, together with a range of associated documents, are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect the changing needs and progress achieved by young people. These documents also provide staff with clear guidance on how to effectively meet the individual needs of young people on a daily basis. Young people are fully supported to attend and contribute to their statutory reviews.

Young people are fully involved in the various consultation processes both within the home and the organisation. These forums enable young people to raise and discuss any issues relating to the delivery of care and services provided within the home. They also help to shape the development of care practices across all homes within the organisation. Young people spoke positively about the various arrangements in place. They also feel their views and comments influence the overall delivery of care provided.

Young people are well aware of how to complain and they are fully supported to raise any concerns or worries openly. Young people feel able to discuss any concerns they may have with a number of staff. Any concerns of young people are taken seriously and prompt action is taken to resolve and address them.

Staff support and encourage young people to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Young people are registered with the relevant health care services and they are fully supported to attend all appointments. Young people confirmed that they are happy with these arrangements. Some young people engage in specialist support and intervention to meet their specific needs. The number of specialist services available to young people has increased to provide them with a wide range of support. Robust systems and practices are well embedded for the safe storage and administration of medication. These arrangements promote the safety and well-being of young people. Young people live in a comfortable and safe environment, which is maintained to a good standard and is clean and tidy. The home is also well furnished and in good decorative order. It provides young people with excellent communal facilities to meet their individual and collective needs. Young people are provided with their own bedrooms which are personalised to their individual tastes. The home also provides them with good bathing and toilet facilities. Suitable locks are fitted to these doors to promote their privacy and dignity.

## **Safeguarding children and young people**

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

Young people feel safe living at the home. Effective and robust safeguarding policies and procedures are well embedded in practice for the protection of young people. All safeguarding matters are overseen by the manager who ensures that these are promptly referred to all relevant agencies and that they are fully investigated. The manager ensures that staff receive regular refresher safeguarding training. This

ensures that the staff are fully aware of their role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

Young people are also safeguarded through the robust practice of the staff recruitment process. The organisation is extremely committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection processes are rigorously followed to ensure that only suitable people are employed to work with young people.

Young people are involved in fire evacuation procedures which ensure that they are fully aware of what to do in the event of an emergency. Effective health and safety and fire audits are carried out as well as ensuring that the various checks, tests and servicing arrangements are carried out at the required intervals. These practices contribute to young people living in a safe environment.

The staff take prompt action to ensure that young people are returned safe at the earliest opportunity when they go missing. On their return, young people are given every opportunity to discuss and reflect on their risk taking behaviour and consider the impact on their own safety and well-being. Strategies and the implementation of contracts are also used to assist young people to reduce future incidents. There have been a couple of incidents where young people had previously been missing for several days. As a result of the action taken by the home, some success has been achieved in this area of practice. Comprehensive records are well maintained and all relevant parties are kept informed of all such incidents.

The staff are well trained in the use of behaviour management techniques to reduce tension and de-escalate inappropriate behaviour. Behaviour management and intervention plans are well established to aid effective and consistent management of negative behaviour. The staff also use a range of incentives to encourage young people to adopt a more positive lifestyle which include vouchers for achieving daily targets. The home has also successfully used contracts, signed by young people, in order to promote good behaviour. The use of sanctions has reduced considerably over recent months. Comprehensive records are maintained of the sanctions applied and there is evidence that these are effectively monitored by the manager. There is also evidence to show that the application of sanctions is successful in some instances. Restraints have also decreased and records indicate that suggestions made by young people after such incidents have effectively contributed to the progress achieved by them.

## **Leadership and management**

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

Young people are well supported by a very experienced Registered Manager who provides effective leadership. The Registered Manager is supported by a staff team who are very committed to ensuring that young people receive a good standard of care and support. There is also a strong focus on developing the experiences of young people and achieving continuous improvement in outcomes for them. The Registered Manager has suitably addressed the three recommendations arising from the last inspection.

The aims and objectives of the home are clearly set out in the home's statement of purpose which are well embedded in practice. Young people receive clear and useful information about aspects of the care and services they can expect to receive while

living at the home.

The manager ensures that good staffing levels are maintained throughout the day and night to meet the individual and collective needs of young people. There have been a number of changes to the staff team within the last year. These changes have impacted on the number of staff (43%) currently holding the required qualification. Those staff who are not currently qualified have either been enrolled on the course or are completing their induction programme. The organisation is, however, very committed to supporting staff to achieve this qualification. Staff feel well supported, as part of their professional development, to undertake a range of training. The organisation has identified a number of specialist courses for staff to attend. These will further enhance their existing skills, knowledge and competence to effectively work with, and meet, the challenging needs of young people accommodated.

The management within the home ensures that the staff are well supported. Their working performance is suitably monitored through regular formal and informal supervision, as well as regular team meetings. Excellent communication is also maintained between staff through thorough handover meetings. These arrangements provide staff with good opportunities to raise and discuss any particular concerns or issues relating to the challenges of working with young people, as well as to share and explore areas of practice. Additional support for staff is also planned which involves specialist input at future team meetings. These arrangements contribute to the improvement of the overall delivery of care provided to young people.

All significant events and incidents are effectively managed with a well-established system in place to ensure that all relevant authorities, including Ofsted, are fully notified of all such events.

The quality of care is regularly monitored through the use of well-established external and internal processes. However, the external monitoring arrangements have not always been routinely carried out when young people are likely to be present in the home. As a result the views of the majority of the young people are not routinely obtained as part of this process. This deficiency has been highlighted in inspections of other homes managed by the organisation. The manager takes all necessary steps to address any recommendations made as a result of the external monitoring and inspection processes. This ensures that continual improvements are made to the care to young people.

Excellent communication is maintained with young peoples' families, where applicable, and all relevant professionals. This was confirmed in discussions with social workers during the inspection process. The manager and staff work effectively with young peoples' families, placing authorities, and other relevant agencies. This ensures that they are fully consulted about pertinent decisions in the review of care to young people which ensures the best possible outcomes are achieved for them.

## 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.