

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC413078
Inspection date	28/05/2013
Inspector	Katarina Djordjevic
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	03/01/2013
--------------------------------	------------

© 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

The home provides care and accommodation for two young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The service is operated by a private organisation.

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**.

Young people receive a good level of care and benefit from living at the home. They have good relationships with staff who are experienced and very committed to improving the lives of young people. Young people receive care and support which takes into account their individual needs and interests.

A new manager has recently been appointed and is in the process of applying to register with Ofsted. Staff are very positive about the inclusive management style and feel listened to and valued. Staff have worked hard since the last inspection to address the requirements and recommendations made. These have all been addressed and this is testament to the commitment and motivation of the staff team. As a consequence, the quality of care has improved significantly for young people.

Feedback from social workers and other professionals is positive about the care young people receive and the progress they are making.

One requirement has been made regarding ensuring individual risk assessments always accurately reflect risks identified.

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
11 (2001)	promote and make proper provision for the welfare of young people with specific reference to ensuring young people's individual risk assessments always accurately reflect identified risks. (Regulation 11 (1) (a))	01/07/2013

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people really do benefit from living at the home and make good progress in most areas, given their starting points. They receive care which takes into account their abilities, disabilities, age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, culture and communication and language needs. Young people's risk-taking behaviour reduces significantly which improves their safety.

Young people have had time to reflect on their previous behaviours and how this has impacted on them and their future. One young person said that before coming to the home they had 'forgotten about me'. Young people are now in a better position to plan for their future and are determined to work towards a career and improving their future life prospects.

Young people's socially unacceptable and risk-taking behaviour reduces during their time at the home. Young people learn about the impact of their behaviours on themselves as well as others and the potential consequences for their adult lives. As a result, young people are safer, healthier and are more likely to become accepted and valued members of society.

Young people's self-esteem and confidence increases. They feel listened to and valued and play an active part in decision-making and the running of the home. For example, they decide what food they eat; the activities they want to participate in and have chosen the décor for their bedrooms and communal areas. Young people have learnt how to advocate for themselves and access different services. This has empowered them to improve their present situation and change parts of their lives. For example, some young people have accessed the Children's Right's Officer which has resulted in increased contact with their families. This has also benefitted young people as they have been able to re-establish positive relationships with their families.

Both young people have finished formal education. Since living at the home they have been provided with various educational and vocational opportunities to improve their future life chances. However, young people have been reluctant to engage consistently and as a result progress is slow in this area which may impact on their

future life opportunities.

Young people benefit from improved health. A reduction in their risk-taking behaviours has contributed to this and they have learnt to take responsibility for their health. Young people learn about healthy eating. As a result, young people have a healthy diet which also takes into account their individual cultural and dietary needs.

Young people make good progress in preparing for independent living. They engage in life skills programmes which take into account their individual needs and abilities. Young people take responsibility for planning, shopping and preparing their own meals for which they are given a budget. They also learn and take responsibility for domestic chores including helping with cleaning and doing their laundry. As a result, young people are better prepared for adulthood and their self-confidence increases.

Quality of care

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

All young people have very detailed care plans, risk assessments and associated records which are reviewed regularly. These records ensure care and support is based on young people's current needs. However, some risk assessments do not accurately reflect individual risks. Although in such cases this does not impact on young people's safety and well-being, it has the potential to misinform staff and other professionals about what the actual risks are. Monthly summary reports are sent to social workers. This ensures social workers and other professionals can monitor that young people's current needs are being met and that the reports help to inform any future planning.

Staff are clearly committed to the promotion of equality and diversity. Day-to-day practice is based on meeting individualised needs and enabling young people to understand and accept difference. Staff are proactive and resourceful in educating young people about difference and discrimination. Young people have had discussions about different cultural diets and have been given opportunities to try different foods such as Halal meat. Staff fully support young people who have been subject to discriminatory behaviour. Staff also ensure that young people whose behaviour is discriminatory understand the impact of their behaviour on others and learn about acceptance. For example, young people visited the Holocaust centre which gave them a better understanding of the impact of discrimination.

Empowerment of young people is at the forefront of practice. Every effort is made to enable young people to be at the centre of decision-making about issues that impact on their day-to-day and future lives. Practices in the home which promote this involvement include: weekly house meetings; individual key work sessions; preparation and supporting young people with attending their review meetings and supporting young people to access advocacy services. As a result, young people really do feel listened to and this improves their sense of self-worth and their trust in adults. One young person commented that before coming to the home, they did not have any faith in being listened to by professionals. However, with the support and

encouragement from staff they have accessed the Children's Rights Officer with successful outcomes. This has also given young people hope that they can affect change if they follow appropriate procedures.

The promotion of healthy living is seen as important by staff who ensure young people's physical, emotional and psychological health needs are met. This involves working closely with health and other professionals. Staff are proactive in identifying appropriate health services for individuals which informs them how to live healthier and safer lifestyles. As a result, young people's health improves and they learn to take responsibility for their health.

Education and training is seen as important by staff at the home and this is impressed upon young people. Opportunities for further education, training and employment are tailored around individual's needs, skills and interests. Young people have been reluctant to consistently engage in the opportunities provided for them. However, staff continue to work tirelessly to ensure young people have every opportunity to reach their full potential in preparation for employment and their adult lives. Staff challenge barriers to young people accessing education, training and employment opportunities. For example, staff are continuing to advocate on one young person's behalf to secure funding from the placing authority for a college placement.

The home is furnished and decorated to a good standard. Young people are central to choosing the decor and making it their home. Young people have their own bedrooms which they are fully supported to personalise. This ensures their individual identities and interests are reflected.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Staff are fully committed to protecting young people from the risk of harm and abuse and in helping them prepare for adulthood. This is possible due to a range of clear safeguarding policies and procedures which are understood and effectively implemented by the staff team. Additionally, staff receive a range of training including child protection; behaviour management and health and safety. As a result, young people feel safe and are safer living at the home. They make good progress and their risk-taking behaviour reduces greatly during their time at the home. This is because young people's previous experiences, risks and current identified needs inform the care and support they receive.

The management of socially unacceptable behaviour is good. This is because staff are skilled at engaging young people and enabling them to recognise the impact of their behaviours on themselves and others. The ethos of the home is on recognising and rewarding positive behaviours which improves young people's self-esteem and confidence. Incentive schemes are used to encourage young people to improve their behaviour and independent living skills. Young people are consulted about the targets set which gives them a sense of responsibility as well as feeling valued and

listened to. This further promotes their sense of self-worth and confidence.

Since the last inspection there has been a reduction in the number of incidents where young people have displayed aggressive and self-harming behaviours. Consequently the number of restraints and sanctions have reduced significantly. Detailed records of incidents, including restraints, are kept. Quality assurance systems including de-briefing sessions with young people and staff help to: ensure that young people understand what happened; identify any concerns arising from the incident and identify how to avoid another incident and any areas for improvement. These practices help to ensure young people are protected from the risk of harm while at the same time promoting positive behaviour. Additionally, they help to identify any training needs.

Procedures and practices relating to young people going missing are robust and help to further protect young people from the risk of harm. Staff work closely with the police, placing authorities and other professional bodies, such as child sexual exploitation teams, to try and minimise the risk of harm to young people. The numbers of incidents of young people going missing reduce during their time at the home.

The management of health and safety is good which helps to protect young people and staff from the risk of harm and injury. This is because all staff take responsibility for the day-to-day management of health and safety and regular testing and servicing of fire safety equipment takes place; young people are informed about fire safety procedures and other health and safety issues on admission. A range of risk assessments are in place which further promote safety.

Safe and rigorous recruitment practices help to ensure young people are protected from the risk of harm and abuse.

Leadership and management

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

The home has a very detailed and comprehensive Statement of Purpose. This informs young people, parents, carers and placing authorities about what to expect. Practice in the home is in line with the Statement of Purpose.

The manager and the staff team are committed to improving the quality of young people's lives. At the last interim inspection in January 2013, the home was judged to have made inadequate progress. Two requirements and five recommendations were made relating to health care, consultation with young people, the management of behaviour and the quality of care records. These have all been addressed which reflects the commitment of the whole staff team, especially given that there has been a short period where there was no manager.

Young people receive a good level of care from a staff team who are experienced, well trained and committed to improving the quality of lives of young people. Staff

do not give up on young people; staff are innovative and resourceful in their approach to problem solving and challenging barriers. Young people are supported by a staff team which comprises a good mix of gender, age, and experience. As a result, young people learn about differences and they benefit from shared experiences. Staffing levels meet the needs of young people and are flexible.

The commitment to continual improvement is clearly evident in the range of internal quality assurance systems which are robust, effective and really do inform future practices. The whole staff team take responsibility for monitoring systems and practices within the home. This is possible due to the culture of respect for each other's strength and weaknesses within the team. Open communication between team members enables them to challenge and question each other's practice and debate issues objectively. The range of internal quality assurance systems are further complemented by the monthly visits carried out by a representative from the company.

There is a clear system in place to notify appropriate authorities of all significant events relating to the protection of young people living at the home. This helps to further promote young people's well-being and protects them from harm.

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.