

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Elizabeth Tanner
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is operated by a private company and provides care for up to three young people. The home is registered to provide care for young people with emotional or 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**.

Young people benefit from a high level of individualised care and support from a motivated and committed staff team. Effective care planning, tailored to the individual young person, means that young people make positive progress from their starting points.

Young people say they are settled in this home and describe it as, 'chilled'. Activities are varied and young people encouraged to experience new opportunities. Young people contribute to their care planning and are consulted about the running of the home. An experienced Registered Manager provides effective leadership. Monitoring processes are in place and this ensures strengths are built upon.

There are two areas requiring improvement from this inspection. This includes updating the Statement of Purpose and ensuring that confidential discussions cannot be over heard. These shortfalls have not had an impact on the safety of young people.

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
4 (2001)	ensure that the home's Statement of Purpose gives the full details of the range of needs that the home is intended to meet. (Regulation 4(1) Schedule 1.8)	30/11/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure information about individual children is kept confidential. This is in particular regard to young people being able to hear discussions in the staff office. (NMS 22.3)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Through safe and nurturing care young people build positive relationship with staff and develop in confidence. Young people make good progress in this home and begin to establish strong routines. This means they are better able to engage with daily expectations of education and health appointments. A professional visiting the home commented in the increased confidence of the young people which could be seen by their willingness to sit and chat with visitors. Healthy lifestyles are encouraged. Young people engage in a range of physical activities which help promote healthy outcomes. They attend routine health appointments and work with specialist health provision as well. Young people confirm that staff talk to them about smoking cessation and highlight the health risks smoking brings.

Young people make progress in respect of education given their starting points. All young people in the home have aspirations for the future and have identified goals they wish to achieve. They think about future employment. Staff work hard to ensure young people establish routines that in time will assist in maintaining a work or college routine. Young people benefit from appropriate contact with family and friends in line with individual care plans. Parents are encouraged to visit the home and young people are enabled to stay overnight with friends. This enables young people to develop their sense of identity and belonging in a safe and secure manner.

Quality of care

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

Relationships between staff and young people are a strength in this home. Young people benefit from a caring environment in which positive behaviour is encouraged and boundaries effectively established. Young people say the rules of the home are clear and reasonable. A young person said, 'I can't remember when I last had one of those sanction things.' Young people confirm that their views are genuinely sought out. They participate in meetings about the home with their peers. Staff provide opportunities for one-to-one discussions as well as general chats. Key work sessions take place regularly and young people have every opportunity to contribute their written views about the session.

Individual placement plans and risk assessments, prepared by the home, are of a high quality and ensure young people have effective and personalised care. Complaints by young people are rare, but when they do occur they are responded to promptly and appropriately. Through this, young people know they are respected and their sense of self-worth is enhanced. Education is promoted within the home and staff support young people to access appropriate courses. Staff accompany young people to their education if this is appropriate and offer support to the young person. Through this any difficulties or barriers to involvement are addressed at an early stage.

The ethos of the home encourages young people to aspire to an active and fulfilling lifestyle. They enjoy a range of activities inside and out of the home. Young people have opportunities to visit museums, leisure facilities and organised groups such as cadets. Such opportunities enhance their life experiences and help develop learning and skills. Detailed health plans ensure individual needs are effectively met. Healthy lifestyles for all young people are encouraged through activities, education and balanced meals. Young people are involved in the planning, shopping and preparation of meals and this assists in the development of essential life skills. Communication between staff and health professionals is effective. One professional said, 'Staff are brilliant. Ask all the right questions and involve me.'

Young people live in a comfortable and homely environment. Although in a rural environment, bus services and sufficient cars at the home mean that young people are not isolated or restricted in their agreed contact with family and friends. Privacy is not always good. Young people can hear conversations in the staff office from their bedrooms. This means information about young people and staff is not always as confidential as it should be.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people are safe while living at the home. Key work and group discussions support young people to learn about hazards and potential risks. Risk assessments are robust and young people are actively involved in their preparation. Young people did not consider bullying to be a problem, but expressed confidence in staff to

address this if necessary.

Behaviour management is excellent in the home and positive behaviour is actively promoted. Young people respond to planned incentives and this system is supported by staff who effectively redirect challenging behaviour. Because of this, restraint is rarely used and young people express pride in the improvements in their behaviour. Young people learn that staff care about them and their welfare. Comprehensive procedures ensure that staff know what to do if a young person goes missing from the home. Staff respond in a planned and active manner. Young people are followed, telephoned and searched for on a routine basis. They are welcomed home when found. One young person said, 'I hardly ever run now and anyway staff know where to look for me.'

Staff recruitment and vetting is robust with information being recorded both in files kept in the home and in central files held at the head office. This helps prevent unsuitable people from being recruited to the home. Investigations into allegations are handled effectively. Young people and staff are provided with a safe environment in which to live and work.

Leadership and management

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

Young people are cared for by an enthusiastic staff team. They are well supported by the Registered Manager, who one young person described as, 'the best manager you could have.' Staff confirm that supervision is regular and effective support available in the home.

The Registered Manager can demonstrate continuing capacity for improvement. Requirements from the previous inspection have been met. One recommendation in respect of staff being trained if they are to supervise contact is not yet met but a training provider to undertake this is being sourced for the whole organisation. Staff say that the training they are offered is of a good standard. Previously identified shortfalls in appropriate sleeping accommodation for staff have been addressed through the building of an extension. The home's Statement of Purpose does not identify the range of care it provides. However, this shortfall has not affected the welfare of young people.

The management team makes good use of a range of monitoring activities, with daily checks of records and task lists routinely undertaken. Handover between staff teams is detailed and ensures information is effectively communicated. A Regulation 33 visitor visits the home on a monthly basis. Following a requirement at the last inspection, these reports now show improved involvement with young people. The Registered Manager responds to any areas identified in these reports, demonstrating a wish to promote improvement.

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* (March 2011) and the evaluation schedule for children's homes.