

Inspection report for children's home

---

|                                |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC062309     |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 9 July 2009  |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Helen Walker |
| <b>Type of Inspection</b>      | Key          |

---

|                                |                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 7 January 2009 |
|--------------------------------|----------------|

---

© Crown copyright 2009

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.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Cripins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: [www.tso.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop)

## 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.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

## The inspection judgements and what they mean

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Outstanding:  | this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality |
| Good:         | this aspect of the provision is strong                        |
| Satisfactory: | this aspect of the provision is sound                         |
| Inadequate:   | this aspect of the provision is not good enough               |

## Service information

### Brief description of the service

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six young people of either gender, aged from four years to 17 years old. The home accommodates children with physical disabilities and complex health needs.

The property is a single storey building attached to a day nursery provision. It is situated in a residential area of a town. The home provides young people with individual bedrooms, a communal lounge with dining area, bathrooms and a kitchen. A room situated off the lounge is the staff office. An enclosed garden area is to the front of the home. The home is situated close to local amenities. Access to the local shops and leisure facilities is dependant upon adequate staffing and the availability of transport.

Five young people currently live in the home and were present at the time of the visit. During the visit two of the young people spent time talking to the inspector.

### Summary

At this full, unannounced inspection, all the key national minimum standards were inspected. The actions and recommendations made at the previous inspection were followed up and details of these are outlined in improvements section of this report.

Young people are looked after by a caring and knowledgeable staff team. Thorough health assessments and ongoing support from health professionals ensures a comprehensive and holistic approach to young people's individual health needs.

Education is seen as a significant part of young people's lives and is especially well-promoted by motivated staff.

An action and recommendations have been made to promote the welfare of the young people. These are for statutory review meeting outcomes to be recorded on the young people's file and to ensure certificates are kept on staff files of relevant training received. Some staff have yet to obtain an appropriate childcare qualification relevant to their work, although an ongoing programme of training in relation to this is in place.

The overall quality rating is good.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

### Improvements since the last inspection

Appropriate formal supervision now takes place in order to support the staff in their work. Staff are familiar with the LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board) procedures in respect of the process for reporting child protection matters. Staff handover sessions take place at times that do not compromise the overall care of children.

A recommendation made about staff qualifications, has still to be achieved. However, the home has an ongoing programme of training in place, to enable staff to obtain the appropriate National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3.

## Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Young people using this service have complex health needs and as such their dietary requirements are diverse. Staff are trained and extremely confident in the use of gastric feeding tubes so that individual young people's dietary needs are well met.

Additionally, staff give discrete support to young people who manage their own feeding routines. This allows young people to retain a significant level of independence. Mealtimes are very social occasions and young people said, 'staff are at the table as well and we chat'.

Healthy eating is encouraged, young people with regular diets have varied and nutritious meals provided. Snacks are readily available and include fresh fruit and yoghurts. Opportunities allow young people to go shopping and make choices about the foods they want to eat. There is significant contact and liaison with dieticians which means comprehensive and specialist advice benefits the wellbeing of the young people.

An excellent level of care is provided to ensure the health needs of the young people are met. Thorough health assessments and ongoing support from health professionals ensures a holistic approach to young people's needs. For example, there is a considerable amount of joint working with the local Primary Care Trust (PCT) through the provision of health staff in the home. The manager of the home is a registered nurse and staff receive training to support them in their work. This includes training in moving and handling and meeting the needs of a child who is ventilator dependent.

The home has effective arrangements in place for the safe storage, administration and disposal of medicines. The manager routinely monitors the medication stock, to ensure this is in order. Staff are qualified to provide first aid treatment as needed.

## Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Good systems are in place, to ensure young people's privacy, dignity and confidentiality is respected in the home, for example, young people have their own bedroom and their personal files are kept securely in the home. Additionally, young people said staff make sure bathroom doors are closed at times when young people use these rooms.

A complaints procedure is in place and no complaints have been made by the young people. There are various opportunities in and outside of the home, for young people to make their views known. Young people have contact with staff including their key-workers and with other professionals, in health and education. A number of young people have non-verbal communication. Staff have a good awareness about how the young people express their feelings, such as, through facial expressions, which assists them in establishing the needs of the young people.

Young people confirm there is no bullying taking place. There have not been any occurrences of young people going missing from the home. Staff are aware of the home's procedure and action to take should this happen.

Staff take all reasonable steps to keep young people safe from harm. Staff have safeguarding training which helps them to protect and promote the welfare of young people. Information from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in respect of safeguarding young people is readily available to staff in the home.

Young people's good behaviour is actively encouraged. Staff know and follow young people's care management plans and individual risk assessments to respond to and manage behaviour positively. Young people said their good behaviour is often rewarded as they are not subject to sanctions. For example, young people enjoy shopping trips and are taken to see theatre shows. The home has a 'no restraints' policy with staff trained in the use of de-escalation techniques. However, the manager recognises the value of further training in respect of managing challenging behaviour.

Young people are looked after in an environment that promotes their safety and wellbeing. Equipment and installations are serviced as required to ensure they are safe to use in the home. Management contact with the local fire authority department confirms fire risk assessments are appropriate and that fire evacuation procedures are relevant to the home.

Since the last inspection, no new staff have been employed. The manager confirms that the home's recruitment policy is followed for the employment of staff, to ensure they are suitable to work with young people. Young people are involved in the recruitment process and have a say about the people employed here.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Young people have excellent levels of support from staff, including a designated key worker. More specialist support from health and education professionals is readily available. This comprehensive approach means young people's individual needs, are very well met with the appropriate support systems in place.

Staff, especially key workers, are very familiar with young people's care plans and follow these to ensure they provide effective personal, social and emotional support. For example, staff give young people the opportunity to discuss issues, such as health and safety, keeping safe and personal hygiene. Staff have an extremely good understanding about recognising the needs of young people who have limited or no verbal communication, such as observing young people's body language and eye contact.

Young people said a person from children's rights visits to make sure they are okay. They also said different activities are arranged and a holiday to the coast is planned. Young people are highly delighted at the prospect of the holiday because they have chosen the resort and know, as a wheelchair user, that this is suitable accommodation.

Education is seen as a significant part of young people's lives and is especially well-promoted by motivated staff. The routine and ethos of the home is for young people to receive formal education and wherever possible, to attend educational establishments of their choice. Young people talk very enthusiastically about leaving school and moving on to further education.

The home has facilities to support young people's education and this includes specialist equipment, for example, music systems, games and a computer adapted to suit the needs of

young people who are able to use this. Young people thoroughly enjoy the support and interaction of staff to use this equipment. Few young people receive homework. However, those with homework tasks are well supported and encouraged by staff to complete them.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Young people have care management plans that identify their assessed needs at the home. Staff are knowledgeable and aware of the plans, which help them to provide appropriate care. Young people say staff discuss the plans with them and they have opportunities for input into this through their care and key worker meetings.

There are systems in place for the statutory review of young people's placements and care at the home. Key workers take an active role and encourage young people to attend their review meetings. Young people say they attend the meetings and give their views about their placement and future care. However, written outcomes of recent review meetings are unavailable and details of staff responsibilities and actions to take as a result of the review are not evident.

Young people's contact with family and friends is actively promoted; this is done in line with the young person's wishes and their placement plan. Young people talk enthusiastically about home visits and the contact arrangements in place. The promotion of contact enables young people to continue to have positive links with those who are important to them outside of the home.

Admissions to the home are usually planned and take account of the assessed needs of the young people. Some of the young people who live in this home have very complex health needs. Before admission to the home the manager ensures resources and care in the home meet the young person's needs. Transition planning for young people to leave the home is very well thought out. Staff are proactive in seeking and enabling young people to have appropriate future care and accommodation.

Young people have opportunities in the home to give their opinions about issues that affect their daily life and future. These include one-to-one time with staff and contact with professionals outside of the home, for example, nurses and teachers. Children's meetings in the home allow young people to make decisions about matters that affect them, such as the type of holidays they want, activities and decoration of their bedroom.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Staff encourage and support young people to learn skills to help them, as they move towards adulthood and prepare to leave care. Two young people are 18 years of age which means they are now young adults. Management are aware that for the home to remain registered as a children's home, it has to be wholly or mainly for the accommodation of children. The expedience at which placing authorities deal with transition planning is out of the control of the home. However, staff continue to work with young people's social workers, to enable a planned and seamless transition into adult services.

Aims and objectives are part of young people's independence plan and work hand in hand with their transition plan. Staff promote young people to learn skills that will help them as they

leave care. For example, young people are encouraged to understand the value of money and open a bank account to save money for items of their choice. Staff place a strong emphasis on multi-agency working so that young people have the necessary support on leaving care.

The home provides good quality accommodation which enables young people to live in an environment that is comfortably furnished, well-maintained and adapted to meet their physical and care needs. This includes specialist medical equipment and spacious rooms and corridors for wheelchair users. Young people have choices in the decorations of the home and personalise their bedrooms with objects that are important to them.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The statement of purpose reflects what the home offers and was reviewed in November 2008, to amend staffing details and to reflect, at times, the care of young people who have reached 18 years of age. Written and pictorial information is available, which describes the routines and care given at the home.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The home has a commitment to improve equality and diversity through care practices and staff training. Young people are treated as individuals and their assessed needs are well considered. Staff take the opportunity to improve the life chances of young people with disabilities, particularly through the promotion of education and health.

Some of the young people receive one-to-one care in the home from staff employed by the Primary Care Trust, which enables their more specific health care needs to be met appropriately. Young people said staff, 'are all just as nice, look after them properly that they feel able to talk to staff. Young people talk about the opportunities they have to participate in activities outside of the home and that this is with the support of staff.

The management team provides regular supervision to staff, so that they are properly supported in their work with the young people. Staff speak positively about the level of support they receive.

Young people are looked after by a caring and knowledgeable staff team. Staff have opportunities to undertake training, to increase their skills and competencies in their work with the young people. This includes training in respect of communicating with disabled children, autism, regional acquired brain injury training, and equality and diversity. However, certificates to evidence staff completion of relevant training, such as, the use of hoists, is not always contained in staff files.

There are appropriate staffing levels in the home, to supervise and take account of the young people's known needs. All staff are training for, or hold a relevant childcare qualification, to help them in their understanding of caring for young people.

There are comprehensive systems in place to make sure that the work of the home is monitored and that a very good standard of care is maintained. As part of the quality assurance process, the home has achieved the Investors in People (IiP) award. The Registered Manager of this home is also manager of another children's home owned by the same company. Management time is spent between the two homes.

Records are kept of the young people's individual history and progress. These are in good order but incomplete as they do not contain written outcomes from young people's review meetings.

## What must be done to secure future improvement?

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, The Childrens Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

| Standard | Action   | Due date     |
|----------|--|--------------|
| 35       | ensure the result of all statutory reviews are recorded on the young person's file (Regulation 28.1) | 23 July 2009 |

### Recommendations

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

- ensure a minimum of 80% of care staff have the appropriate NVQ level 3 care award or equivalent qualification (NMS 29.5)
- ensure a written record is kept of all training for all staff is maintained in the home, in particular certificates relevant to the training (NMS 31.4)