

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC375540
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 December 2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Jacqueline Malcolm
<b>Type of Inspection</b>	Random

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	21 October 2009
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## 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

The children's home is run by a local authority. It is registered to accommodate up to six young people, from 12 years to 17 years old, of either gender. The home provides care and accommodation to young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties on a long term basis. It is located in a residential area and provides good access to public transport, shops, healthcare, education and leisure facilities.

### Summary

This was an unannounced interim inspection that looked at the progress the service has made regarding the eight actions and seven recommendations raised at the last full key inspection. The outcome area of staying safe was also inspected to see how young people's safety and welfare is promoted. Most of the previous identified shortfalls have been addressed. These improvements benefit the health and welfare of children. However, issues relating to: the approval of the Statement of Purpose; ensuring the manager and staff have a copy of Regulation 33 reports in a timely manner; obtaining personal education and pathway plans; improving the decision making process when placements are made; and the registration of the manager with Ofsted are shortfalls that may compromise the outcomes for young people.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

### Improvements since the last inspection

The service has improved their awareness in promoting young people's health, privacy and dignity. Staff are making a record of the actual meals that young people eat. This practice enables the manager and monitoring visitor to satisfy themselves that young people are eating a healthy, balanced and nutritional diet in line with the menu and take appropriate action if not. The arrangements for purchasing food using purchase orders has ceased and staff now use cash. This means that young people can food shop with staff and not feel embarrassed by institutional practices that does not promote a realistic homely lifestyle.

Young people's care and welfare is enhanced by improved arrangements to ensure that notifications are sent to Ofsted in a timely manner. Young people are made aware of their overall plan of care and are involved in the completion of their placement plans. Staff have increased their awareness around working with young people with specific health needs. This has involved undertaking further training. Staff say that the training was useful and informs their practice.

Improved monitoring systems provide a clearer overview of the homes care practices. This ensures that shortfalls can be identified and addressed in a more robust manner. However, the reports following these visits are not sent to the home in a timely way for the manager and staff to read and provide a response.

The delivery of pathway plans continue to be an area of concern. This is because some young people preparing to leave care do not have them. It is, therefore, it is not clear what the plans are for young people and the role of staff to support their transition into independence. This is an area that the home continues to pursue.

There is a new manager in post who has moved from another children's home. The impact on the current group of young people has not been affected by this transition. An application for the manager's registration is yet to be received by Ofsted.

The registered provider was asked to: make good practice improvements to placement plans showing how young people who go missing without authority may be prevented from leaving the home; review risk assessments; ensure at least four fire drills are completed in 12 month period; and provide an opportunity for young people and staff to meet with the Regulation 33 visitor. Evidence from this inspection indicates that these aspects have been satisfactorily met. However, the Statement of Purpose has not been formally approved and not all young people have personal education plans. The admissions process is still not clear. Young people continue to be placed at the home with no clear recorded decision as to the appropriateness of the placement. In addition, consideration has not been given to the impact that new placements will have on the existing group of young people.

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is not judged.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people's privacy and dignity are respected. They do not share rooms and information about them is confidentially shared. Young people live in an environment that promotes their physical safety and security. This includes regular checks on the fire systems and the vetting of visitors to the home to prevent young people having access to unsafe people.

Complaints made by young people are promptly dealt with and staff take them seriously. Staff ensure that young people are kept informed about any action taken. Young people have access to children's rights for advice and support. This enables them to take their complaints directly to people independent of the home. Staff are trained in safeguarding, which enables them to respond appropriately to any child protection concerns. Young people are supported where safeguarding plans apply to them. They also have access to services that provide support and assistance on any risky behaviour that they may present. For example, sexual exploitation and missing from home without authority.

Staff are aware of young people's potential to bully and effectively counter this behaviour. Young people who go missing without authority are safeguarded in line with agreed protocols. Staff monitor patterns of missing behaviour and involve social workers, police and other professionals. The arrangements are made in the best interests of young people. The management of unacceptable behaviour is good and there is mutual respect between young people and staff. Rewards and incentive schemes limit the need for young people to be restrained and sanctions are few. Positive behaviour is actively promoted and young people present with socially acceptable behaviour.

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

The provision is not judged.

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

The provision is not judged.

## Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

## Organisation

The organisation is not judged.

## 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
6	ensure that all young people preparing to leave care have a pathway plan (Regulation 11)	29 January 2010
34	ensure the manager registers with Ofsted (Regulation 7)	29 January 2010
32	ensure a copies of Regulation 33 reports are made available to the manager and staff in a timely manner. (Regulation 34)	31 December 2009

### Recommendations

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

- ensure that both the needs of the young people concerned, and the likely effects on his/her admission upon the existing group of young people, are taken into account and recorded (NMS 5.7)
- make arrangements to ensure that the Statement of Purpose is formally approved by elected members (NMS 1)
- obtain copies of the personal education plans (NMS 14.2)