

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC036732
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 January 2010
<b>Inspector</b>	Caroline Brailsford
<b>Type of Inspection</b>	Key

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	4 June 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 home is run by the local authority. It provides short breaks for children and young people aged over four years who have a learning disability. Some children may also have a physical disability.

The facilities are provided in a large property near the centre of the village, close to shops, parks and local amenities. There is good-sized shared accommodation with quiet areas provided for children and carers. All bedrooms are single and bathrooms are equipped to meet the personal care needs of the children. There is a large, established and secure garden for young people, with activities suited to the children using the service, including a climbing frame and cycles. Eight young people were present for part of the inspection.

### **Summary**

This key inspection was unannounced and all the key national minimum standards were inspected. Each of the outcome areas have been given a judgement rating. Being healthy, staying safe, positive contribution and organisation are all judged as outstanding. Economic wellbeing and enjoying and achieving are judged as good.

The two recommendations set at the last inspection have both been met and as a result of this inspection, there is one recommendation.

The home provides an outstanding service to young people. Strengths include the robust nature of the care planning process which is very clear about how the needs of young people are to be met. The staff team are very knowledgeable about the needs of the young people and know them exceptionally well. There is also a high value placed on establishing the wishes, views and feelings of all the young people who use the service, whatever their communication method. This helps to keep them safe.

There are robust procedures in place to ensure the safety and welfare of young people and the staff work exceptionally well with other professionals to ensure safety at every opportunity.

The management of the home is very strong and records are scrutinised to ensure that the home is running as it should.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

The two recommendations at the last inspection are met. The manager's job description is currently being reviewed so that it reflects all aspects of her job. Sanctions, which are used around mealtimes have been reviewed. This ensures the home's policy on behaviour management is complied with.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Young people help to choose and enjoy the food in the home. Individual needs and preferences are encouraged and very well provided for. Young people enjoy their favourite foods and their diet is well balanced and nutritious. There is an emphasis on ensuring that food is enjoyed by all and as a consequence mealtimes are a pleasant social occasion.

All aspects of health needs for individuals are met as far as possible. Where there are particular health needs, staff are well trained and very familiar with the most up to date information. Care plans and risk assessments set out the needs very clearly and a high staffing ratio also supports this work. Staff ensure at all times, that the young people are well cared for and that they remain healthy.

All staff members have completed a first aid course, the result being that there is always a first aider in the home should the young people need assistance with a medical issue. The storage, handling and recording of medicines is very safe and well organised. The complex process works well and is followed vigilantly by the staff. Very rarely young people receive household medicines from a stock in the medicine cupboard without the decision of a doctor. However they receive household medicines only after instruction from their parents, ensuring that their safety is protected.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Young people enjoy a high level of privacy. They have a single bedroom where they can spend time alone if they wish. The staff are good at respecting privacy in a way that good supervision levels can be maintained. Personal care is dealt with in a way that promotes dignity.

All young people are able to let staff know if they have a problem. This is because their communication is well understood by staff and the young people know them well and feel able to talk to them. This helps to ensuring safety and welfare. There is a central record of complaints in the home and there have been no complaints since the last inspection.

Young people's needs and behaviour are well understood by the staff and staff are positive about the way that communication links to behaviour. They are good at communicating in the young person's own method so that difficult behaviour can be minimised. Staff also work as a team and with consistency so the young people can develop and progress as a result. Staff have completed training and are competent in diffusing situations to try to avoid the use of physical intervention. They try to find the root of the problem and understand how in turn, these issues impact on the young people emotionally and on their behaviour.

Young people have their needs and risks identified in documents. These detailed documents are well understood by staff and are clear about how risks can be minimised as far as possible. They therefore help to keep the young people safe. The staff at all levels understand and are clear about what they should do if there is a safeguarding issue because they have been well trained. The culture in the staff team enables them to identify safeguarding issues quickly and they are vigilant about the safety and vulnerability of disabled children in residential care.

There are exceptionally clear lines of communication with other professionals and the openness this creates, ensures that that maximum information is shared and that professionals work together to keep young people safe. All aspects of safety are scrutinised by the management team and the process for the exchange of information is extremely good.

The registered manager ensures that the building is safe for the young people, staff and visitors. Fire drills have taken place although the records are not as clear on this as they should be. Tests on all fire equipment in the building are in line with the requirements of the fire authority and inspection of the gas, electric and portable appliance testing (PAT) are all up to date. This ensures the safety of the staff, visitors and young people using the building.

There is a recruitment system in the home which maintains good levels of safety for the young people. This includes criminal records bureau (CRB) checks at enhanced level, proof of identity and references prior to employment. Although the actual personnel record is kept centrally within the personnel department, the registered manager ensures that she views and keeps her own checks. This helps to ensure that all staff and visitors to the home are safe to work with the young people.

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

The provision is good.

There are high staffing levels in the home, this has allowed for quality time to be spent with young people and therefore good relationships have been developed. Staff know young people extremely well, and there is a robust system for ensuring that they receive the relevant personal support in the home.

All young people receive their usual education while using the short break service. There are good links with schools and staff attend school visits and education reviews so that consistency can be achieved. This helps young people progress and develop.

The home's facilities and grounds ensure that there are plenty of activities for young people to access and enjoy. Young people comment that they really enjoy the activities. The staff ensure that both the needs of individuals and the group are met and spend time on a daily basis carefully planning activities. Trips out are facilitated and young people regularly have access to paid activities in the community. There is a good link between developing independence skills and activities to ensure that where it is safe and appropriate, young people can practice accessing activities without the staff.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The care plans are excellent and keep staff up to date with the changing needs of the young people. They are regularly updated and set out the care to be provided. Staff ratios are organised around the identified needs of the group and this allows for a very high quality service to be provided.

Young people are supported when they move into and leave the home. There is a rigorous risk assessment process which ensures that good decisions are made about whether young people's needs can be met and to ensure that compatibility is managed safely. Staff are particularly good at supporting young people when they move to other placements, they invite prospective carers to the home and go to the new environment with them until they get to know the staff there. They are incredibly supportive to young people through this process which ultimately helps young people with some difficult transitions.

Arrangements for young people to maintain contact with families are good and parents feel well informed about progress. Staff are well aware of any sensitive information with regard to contacts and help young people with issues of separation during their stay.

Staff consult regularly with young people and this is integral to their day. They demonstrate that they place great value on the views and opinions of the young people and spend a lot of quality time with them to ensure that their views can be established, whatever their disability.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Young people are encouraged by staff to develop their independence, providing them with confidence and skills that will support their future economic wellbeing. This is well covered in care plans and progress that young people make is celebrated.

The home is comfortable, warm and well maintained, it is clean and tidy and extremely well suited to the needs of the young people. There are several areas for play and relaxation which allow young people to spend time alone doing activities or in groups. The facilities in the home include a wide variety of play equipment and the young people enjoy a large garden where they can ride bikes, go-karts and use outdoor play equipment.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The Statement of Purpose is current and up to date. It is regularly updated and reflects the work that is taking place. There is also a young people's guide. The emphasis when there is a new young person, is to ensure that they are presented with information in a timely way that that is suited to their needs.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding and the staff ensure that each young person is seen as an individual and is treated as such.

Students progress and enjoy their stay because the staff have the right skills and qualities to look after them. Staff are well trained and are extremely familiar with the needs of individuals. As a consequence, they know how needs should be met. They are very committed to ensuring that they create a fun, warm and caring environment. Staffing levels are high so that they get to know the young people exceptionally well and time spent with the students is quality time.

The information presented to staff can be complex with different young people accessing the service on each shift. However, the staff work well as a team and communicate effectively. Professional handovers, team meetings and supervision sessions are organised which ensure that they are working with the most up to date information.

The management and organisation of the home delivers very positive outcomes for young people. The registered manager is a very effective manager. She knows the operational issues of the home and the needs of the young people well. The support and management of staff is extremely competent. The manager is supported by assistant unit managers who also successfully impact on the management of the home. There is a robust system for monitoring young people's progress and operational issues. This ensures that the home continues to provide good and safe care to young people, and that they directly benefit from their stay in residence.

Records are well organised and presented. They provide an accurate record of young people's progress and of the operational running of the home.

## **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
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### **Recommendations**

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

- ensure that all fire drills are recorded. (NMS 26)