

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspector</b>	Jacqui Gosling
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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 a large, spacious, detached house located near to the centre of a small town. There are a good range of local shops and community facilities. Public transport is easily accessible. To the front of the property is a car park with a grassed bank and conifers which creates a natural barrier between the house and the road.

The setting provides accommodation for up to seven young people between 10 and 17 years. They have complex social, emotional and developmental needs and moderate to severe learning or physical disabilities. Some young people attend the home on a respite or part-time basis. All have their own bedrooms. Staff work in partnership with a variety of other agencies and in close co-operation with parents.

### Summary

This unannounced key inspection concentrates on key national minimum standards focusing on all outcome areas. How staffing and management arrangements support the operation of the home is also considered.

Pre-inspection information and questionnaires were provided prior to the inspection for young people, families, professionals, staff and the manager.

The home is judged as good overall with some outcome areas judged as outstanding. Young people are receiving an excellent level of care and support because staff are enthusiastic, dedicated and well informed about their needs and circumstances.

Young people are clearly benefiting from living in a home that has a strong emphasis on promoting their health, welfare and safety. However, placing social workers must provide up to date, complete and signed looked after child paperwork.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

### Improvements since the last inspection

One recommendation was made following the last inspection that took place in December 2008. The home was asked to ensure accurate records are maintained of regular testing of the emergency lighting, fire alarms and fire fighting equipment. This recommendation has been fully addressed. As a result the safety of young people is safeguarded

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff ensure young people are healthy through good diet; personal hygiene and infection control. In partnership with parents or the person with parental responsibility, they actively seek out the services necessary to meet the individual needs of young people, for example, physiotherapy and ophthalmology services.

Young people enjoy healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary and health needs, there is always a vegetarian option available. Staff complete training in food hygiene as required.

The health and care needs of young people are identified and updated regularly. A clear plan for each young person details how their specific and general health issues are to be addressed. All young people are registered with the required health professionals. The home has a Personal Health Education System in a suitable communication form to enable staff to work with the young people to understand and promote their good health and understanding of sexual relationships and feelings.

Staff, in partnership with the person with parental responsibility, actively seek out further services when required to meet the needs of the young people. Staff encourage young people to participate, to exercise and take part in activities to promote their health. All young people have looked after child medicals as required. This means that they receive health care that actively promotes their wellbeing. The wellbeing of young people is further promoted by staff undertaking training in first aid.

The files for some of the young people do not contain the required signed looked after child medical consent from the person with parental responsibility. Permission for the administration of first aid or non-prescribed medication has not been obtained for any of the young people and staff were not aware that this was required. This could potentially delay young people receiving prompt medical attention.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Information held on behalf of all young people is correctly stored in lockable facilities. Staff are aware of their responsibilities to promote privacy and confidentiality and their practice is consistent with the organisation's policies and procedures. The facilities and arrangements for showering and bathing ensure the young people have their privacy respected. The manager states no room searches take place. He could not, however, find a policy or procedure for staff to follow if a search becomes necessary.

Due to the high level of staffing and supervision of the young people the opportunity for bullying is minimal. Young people spend limited time together, their evenings are well planned giving them opportunities to take part in different activities. Although, none of the young people currently living here abscond, there are appropriate policy and procedures in place to ensure staff know how to ensure the safety of young people.

The welfare of young people is promoted by a robust complaints policy. There is an effective system in place to record any concerns made known by young people. Young people benefit from regular visits from the National Youth Advocacy Service. Staff are equipped and trained to fulfil their role and responsibilities regarding protection and safeguarding. The procedures in the home fully comply with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

Behaviour management policies are robust and strategies have as their prime objective the creation of a safe, supportive environment, which considers the age, understanding and ability of the young people. Staff encourage appropriate behaviour and appear very comfortable with their role and it is clear they understand the young people they care for. All staff are trained in crisis situations to manage physical intervention and prevention. Physical intervention, when used is only to prevent young people harming themselves or others.

There is positive and effective interaction between staff and the young people. Staff appear very comfortable with their role and records identify they clearly understand the need for boundaries while maintaining a high quality relationship between themselves and young people. Sanctions are recorded appropriately. Records are also kept of the rewards the young people obtain. This is good practice as it gives a more balanced view of their behaviour.

Young people live in a home that provides for their physical safety and security. Close supervision of young people is an important and a prominent feature in the way staff manage perceived risks and the young people's vulnerability. A strong focus is also given to management of their health and safety. There are appropriate risk assessments for all aspects of the safety of the premises and grounds including serious incident planning.

The records kept in the home show that robust procedures are in place to protect young people from fire. All the fire systems are tested regularly. Staff and young people undertake fire drills in excess of requirements. However, a night time drill has not occurred in the last year as required. Relevant certificates show that regular servicing and maintenance is completed on all equipment. Certificates of Public and Employer liability are displayed as required.

All visitors to the home are monitored and required to sign in the log book. These procedures ensure all young people living here are protected from potential risks.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The progress and development of young people is well documented in their files and shows how effectively they are supported throughout their stay. For example, young people are provided with regular opportunities to spend individual time with their key worker who ensures that they have opportunities to discuss their needs and express their feelings.

Staff know the young people well and are able to respond to them in a way that considers and respects them as individuals. Staff know and implement the methods of communication that they use. Ofsted young people's surveys have been put in suitable formats by staff to enable young people to contribute their views to the inspection process.

External services are requested as necessary to meet the needs of individual young people. For example, an advocate from the National Youth Advocacy Service visits them on a monthly basis. This enables young people to talk to someone independent of the home.

The educational progress of young people in school is actively promoted and encouraged by the staff. There is regular communication and cooperation with schools. The home provides transportation and support in the school environment, where appropriate. Up to date personal education plans, individual education plans and statements of educational needs are on file and meetings are arranged to ensure they are appropriately reviewed.

All young people are supported and encouraged to participate in hobbies and activities of their choice. They are supported by staff on a one-to-one basis within the home and two staff to one young person when they are out in community to ensure they are safe. Young people are taken to activities organised within the community. They attend the Young people's Rights Day. Some young people are involved in training for the special Olympics event.

Staff compile 'memory boxes' for all the young people to take with them when they leave the home. These boxes contain certificates of their achievements, photographs of their holidays, activities, their artwork and any sporting trophies. This is good practice.

Staff ensure that there is a balance between supervised and unsupervised time in the day as appropriate for individual young people that is risk assessed and takes into consideration their age, gender, abilities and interests.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Young people have their needs assessed, planned for and reviewed effectively. Written in-house information about them is current, informative and clear. However, some placing social workers have not provided all the required looked after child paperwork.

Staff work in partnership with parents or the person with parental responsibility to provide care that meets the needs of their child. Staff encourage young people to give their views and are alert and responsive to the different ways that they communicate and use communication aids on a day-to-day basis. The home produces a detailed range of information about the progress and development of young person, which is then communicated at formal review meetings.

In accordance with their care plans all young people are encouraged to maintain contact with members of their family. Staff clearly understand how important communication and contact with their family is for the young people and support their arrangements.

The manager and senior staff are clearly able to show that all young people are appropriately placed. However, there are no written records available to show that impact assessments are completed before young people are placed in the home as required.

Staff respect and value equality and diversity and it is clearly shown throughout the young people's in house placement plans that their individual needs are identified and addressed. Staff have a proactive approach to working with parents, external agencies, social workers and other professionals. A pre inspection survey returned to Ofsted by a parent states communication 'is excellent'.

Significant time is taken to build relationships between the staff and the young people. Staff have clear expectations of appropriate behaviour. Young people clearly benefit from receiving support from staff that is focused on their needs and achievements.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is outstanding.

Young people live in a very comfortable home that is decorated and furnished to a good standard. providing suitable aids and adaptations to serve the needs of the young people it accommodates.

Photographs of the young people and collages of their trips, activities and achievements are displayed throughout the home. This creates a pleasant domestic style environment. Bedrooms are personalised to reflect the hobbies and interests of the young people living here and

demonstrate how they each take an active role in the choice of colour and design. This helps them to feel included in the decision making process and gives them a sense of belonging.

The home provides ample space and has adaptations that reflect the number, age, ability and gender of the young people. For example, hoists, a soft play room, a spa room, a sensory room, a lift to the first floor bedrooms.

The interior and exterior of the home are maintained in a good state of structural and decorative repair. The garden is a large well maintained outdoor environment for young people. The staff group make it a stimulating and interactive environment for young people. For example by planting and growing vegetables and herbs and organising sports days.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Young people, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a statement of purpose and young people's guide, which outlines the principles, practice and the services that they can expect from the home.

There is a clear staffing structure with clear lines of accountability in the home. The Registered Manager provides effective leadership to the staff team and young people. He is actively involved in the day-to-day operation of the home and has clear expectations that the staff team will achieve the best possible outcomes for all young people in their care. The home has clear deputising arrangements in his absence.

The pre inspection questionnaire states that the team's training and development needs are met. Staff say they undertake a wide range of training to meet the complex needs of the young people they care for. However, the training matrix is out of date and does not show who has completed mandatory training or when refresher training is due.

Staff supervision records show that staff receive supervision within timescales but the records do not fully comply with standards. Staff team meetings minutes available show that meetings are not being held monthly as required to ensure staff are effectively supported and guided in promoting the young people's welfare.

There are appropriate systems in place to monitor the daily lives of the young people currently living in the home. Regulation 33 visits are undertaken monthly to monitor the overall care and welfare of the young people. The manager also undertakes quality monitoring of all the files and records as required.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. It is clearly shown throughout the young people's placement plans that their individual needs are identified and addressed. Their files contain a range of information about their history and progress, which matches the requirements set out in Schedule 3 of the Young people's Homes Regulations 2001.



## 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 that the young people's Looked After Child documentation from their placing authority is up to date, complete and has all the required signatures (Regulation 28, Schedule 3 (18)).	14 January 2010

### Recommendations

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

- obtain and retain on file prior written permission from a person with parental responsibility for all young people, for the administration of first aid and appropriate non-prescription medication. (NMS 13.4)
- provide guidance for staff and children on when it may be necessary to search a child's possessions (NMS 9.8)
- ensure at least one fire drill is held at night in a 12 month period and the times drills take place is recorded (NMS 26.8)
- ensure both the needs of the young person concerned and the likely effects of their admission upon the existing group of residents, are taken into account and recorded in decisions on admission to the home (NMS 5.7)
- ensure a written record is kept in the home, detailing the time and length of each supervision and ensure both the supervision and member of staff sign the record (NMS 28.3)
- ensure staff meetings occur at least monthly (NMS 28.10)
- ensure a written record of all training for all staff is maintained in the home (NMS 31.5).