

Inspection report for children's home

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC384018
<b>Inspection date</b>	9 June 2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Pat Stanton
<b>Type of Inspection</b>	Key

---

<b>Date of last inspection</b>	5 November 2008
--------------------------------	-----------------

---

© 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

The setting is a large five bedroom modern detached house on a new housing estate. It is near to shops and other amenities including a primary and secondary school and has good transport links. The ground floor has a large lounge with satellite television, a large dining room and a kitchen with modern appliances and a small utility area for use as a laundry. There is a ground floor room for use as an office with shelving and lockable storage. Attached to the house is a room converted from a double garage space into a study area/indoor play area. The garden is mainly laid to lawn and is an adequate space for outdoor play and sports activities. There is parking for two cars in the drive and an additional two spaces in front of the home.

### Summary

The unannounced full inspection assessed all the key National Minimum Standards (NMS). The judgement for, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution and organisation is satisfactory. Staying healthy, staying safe and economic well-being are judged as good.

The home provides a good level of individualised care and support to young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, focused on meeting the needs of the individual young person to ensure their well-being and safety. Young people speak highly of the staff and Registered Provider who care for them and relationships between staff and young people are mutually respectful. Comments from young people include: 'It's a good home and staff are kind'. The home is managed well but needs to improve record keeping. Young people say they feel safe and secure. All staff are encouraged to complete National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 4, to help them meet the needs of young people accommodated.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

### Improvements since the last inspection

This is the home's first inspection since registration.

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young people's health needs are met and their welfare is safeguarded by the home's policies and procedures for administering medicines and providing treatment. Medication is securely stored within the home and designated staff administer medication safely. Clear records are maintained for the administration of medication and staff are vigilant in booking medication in and out of the home, ensuring accurate and up-to-date records are maintained. The administration records and recordings are not audited by senior staff on a regular basis to ensure records are up-to-date. Files contain drug information, a photograph of the young person and signatures of two staff members who dispense medication.

Young people enjoy healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs. They have opportunities to plan, shop for and prepare meals to help them prepare for adulthood. Young people are encouraged to eat meals at the table and share social occasions with staff. Young people can have their say and help to decide menus and receive adequate quantities of food, although some young people say they would like bigger portions. Young people are encouraged

to share diversity and other cultures, for example, the home provides specialised diets for young people who come from different ethnic backgrounds. Young people have a weekly takeaway night, which they really enjoy and benefit from home-cooked, well-balanced and nutritious meals, provided by staff working in the home. The home is sourced with healthy snacks and fresh fruit. Young people confirm they are allowed in the kitchen to help themselves to food and drinks during the day. The home's kitchen is clean and well organised.

Young people live in a healthy environment where their health needs are identified and services provided to meet them. Files do not contain all relevant health information including details of the child's General Practitioner (GP), dentist and optician although records confirm young people are registered and supported by staff to visit these professionals. Records of appointments with health professionals are not clearly maintained, although staff do ensure the physical, emotional and health needs of young people are identified and appropriate action is taken to support these needs. Young people confirm they have access to sexual health services in the community and may access these in confidence. The home is sourcing a Looked After Children's Nurse locally to help complete health checks and give advice to young people. The home has recently employed a therapeutic worker to help support young people and the homes staff help to meet the emotional needs of young people.

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

The provision is good.

Young people's privacy is respected and information is handled in a confidential manner. Young people's records are stored appropriately to protect their confidentiality and staff understand the importance of confidentiality and sharing information with others, for example young people's files are clearly marked with details of the people, who may access files. This help protect young people's identity.

Young people's privacy is respected when washing. Young people say they get enough privacy and use their bedrooms and the games room to have time away from the rest of the group when required.

There are procedures in place to be followed which indicate that any complaint is addressed without delay and procedures observed at inspection evidenced that young people know how to make a complaint and feel confident appropriate action will be taken. There are no complaints from young people against the service.

Young people are protected from bullying. Staff are vigilant with regard to relationships within the home and high supervision levels mean that there are limited opportunities for bullying or inappropriate relationships to develop. Young people discuss bullying in house meetings and any issues are addressed with individuals concerned.

Staff are clear about their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding young people's welfare and staff are encouraged to keep their knowledge up-to-date by attending appropriate training. Staff are confident and clear about the action to take following any child protection incidents. This ensures that young people are protected from abuse. Child protection incidents at the home are dealt with appropriately and all professionals notified within appropriate timescales.

Young people are assisted to develop socially acceptable behaviour through encouragement of acceptable behaviour, rewards systems and a constructive response to inappropriate behaviour.

There is guidance in place for staff to adhere to when working with individual young people and no restraints have been used in the home since registration. Sanctions are rarely used as staff prefer to offer one-to-one support to young people who are experiencing emotional difficulties, which helps prevent incidents of negative behaviour. Reports from placing social workers confirm the reduction of negative behaviour in young people indicating a stable and supportive environment.

Young people live in a home that provides physical safety and security. There are no obvious hazards to compromise welfare, and fire safety checks are carried out at the required intervals. Evacuation procedures are completed and maintenance work and testing happens on a regular basis, although not all records are complete on file. Young people confirm they know what to do in the event of a fire. Fire signs and window restrictors are not in place in the home as this is not a requirement of the local fire authority.

Young people's health and safety is protected by careful vetting of visitors to the home to prevent young people being exposed to potential abusers. Records confirm all visitors sign in and out of the building. No member of staff is allowed to work in the home until full checks are completed and recruitment files confirm this. Recruitment files are comprehensive and detailed and ensure young people are protected from harm.

Young people are also protected through systems that are in place that prevent absence without authority. This ensures their safety. There have been a very low number of incidents recorded of young people missing from home; however, there are systems in place to notify the appropriate authorities of any significant events and risk assessments complete for young people who are at risk. The home works closely with professionals' to help keep young people and the community safe.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people enjoy sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect and they are provided with individualised support in line with their needs and wishes. The care plans define any significant risks and good risk assessments are in place, for example, for activities and young people's vulnerable behaviour outside the home. Young people are encouraged to develop skills linked to their ability, for example, their strengths are highlighted in their care plans and staff are encouraged to allow young people to complete tasks they are interested in, when appropriate, and achieve their goals and aspirations. Examples include young people participating in drama clubs and ice skating. Staff are able to communicate well with young people, and consequently staff and young people interact positively with each other.

Young people are supported and encouraged to attend and achieve in education, supported by a committed staff team and the effective leadership and management of the establishment. The home supports young person who are excluded from school with private tuition and also transports young people who have to travel long distances to remain in their previous school which enables continuity for the young people, although education files do not all contain relevant personal education plans and school reports to evidence the progress of young people's education.

Young people are able to pursue their particular interests, develop confidence in their skills and are supported and encouraged by staff to engage in leisure activities. The home has not

yet set up activities which are planned in advance with the inclusion of all young people accommodated, although young people say they look forward to this year's summer holiday with the home. Young people confirm staff take them to go karting, football matches and local restaurants which they really enjoy. Young people have access to transport provided by staff, which enables young people to access leisure and educational activities in the community.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people in the home are appropriately placed there. Young people's needs are assessed appropriately and their care plans outline how these needs are to be met. Care plans do not contain all up-to-date information and essential information including medical and educational information. Young people's monthly care plans and background information with a chronology, of the young people's day-to day behaviour is very good. Staff's good knowledge of young people's individual needs makes them aware of how their complex needs are to be met. Staff complete daily records which include information about the care, diet intake and support given to young people.

Young people's needs and development are reviewed regularly in the light of their care and progress at the home. Staff contribute effectively to a young person's review and this ensures that any decisions are implemented. Staff attend the local authority 'Looked After Children' (LAC) reviews and provide a written report. The report provides up-to-date information, through discussion, as to how young people's individual needs or any concerns are met. Minutes of reviews are available on a young person's file. Their needs are reviewed regularly but are not always linked to their individual care and progress within the home. Young people confirm they are able contribute to their review and planned care, although no comments are recorded on file.

Young people are able to maintain constructive contact as deemed appropriate by the placing authority with families, friends and other people who play a significant role in their lives. Individual plans contain information regarding contact and staff support family members to visit the home.

Young people are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives in line with their individual needs. Staff communicate effectively with young people which results in them being able to respond, making their needs known. Staff are aware of the different ways that individual young people communicate and their responses. As a result young people are helped to make decisions about their lives and influence the way in which the home is run.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Young people in placement are well-presented and have appropriate clothing and belongings to meet their needs. They receive pocket money and appropriate allowance to help purchase clothing while accommodated. Young people have a locked area to store any valuables and money held for young people is managed appropriately. Young people's clothing and personal requisites are fully met.

Young people live in a very well-designed modern home which provides sufficient space to meet their needs. The home is spacious and decorated to a high standard and the environment

is kept clean and well maintained. The home is equipped for young people to live and have fun in and has a garden which is secure and contains a basketball post and furniture for young people to use in the summer months. The home is modern, bright and young people confirm they love their bedrooms which are fully equipped to help young people enjoy time alone. The home has converted the garage into a games room. Young people say they enjoy spending time in the room to "Chill out".

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Young people are guided through and know what services they can expect from the home, how they will be cared for and who they are likely to share with, and a clear statement of how the home operates is available for parents and others needing this information. The home's Statement of Purpose (SOP) covers matters as outlined in Schedule 1 of The Children's Homes Regulations.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good and young people are encouraged by staff to maintain contact with family, friends and follow religious traditions to help meet their cultural needs.

Young people receive care and support from trained and competent staff. The roles and responsibilities of staff are clear. They receive a brief induction training which includes child protection, health and safety and first aid. Over 80% of staff in the home have completed the National Vocational Qualification Level 3, in caring for young people and are encouraged by the homes management to undertake NVQ Level 4. Staff have attended training in restraint and receive a good level of supervision and support. The Acting Manager is completing NVQ Level 4 Registered Managers Award and along with the Registered Provider spends much time in the home. Staff are clear about who to contact in the case of an emergency.

Staff are sufficient in number, experience and qualifications to meet the needs of the young people. The rotas and daily logs demonstrate there are sufficient numbers of staff on duty at all times. Young people receive individual support reflected in the good staffing levels. An appropriate number of staff meet the needs of the young people. As a result young people benefit from good support that experienced staff offer, to meet their individual needs.

The home has not yet completed an annual quality assurance and monitoring system as the home has only been operating for 6 months, although feedback from young people and placing social workers is positive. Regulation 33 visits are completed regularly, unannounced to help evaluate and improve the service. Reports confirm actions is taken by the Acting Manager to improve the service. This contributes to improved outcomes for young people.

Young people enjoy the stability of an efficiently run home with a stable staff team and experienced, Registered Provider and Acting Manager. The Acting Manager has applied to Ofsted for the new Registered Manager's position and to employ a new Deputy Manager to help support his role. This helps maintain the stability of the home for young people.

## 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	obtain the information specified in Schedule 3 in respect of each child (Regulation 28.1 (a)(b)(c)	10 September 2009
33	establish and maintain a system for monitoring in respect of each child matters in Schedule 6 (Regulation 34 (1)	10 September 2009

### Recommendations

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

- ensure fire drills records include the time of evacuation, responses and names of persons involved and include at least one fire drill at night and that regular testing of emergency equipment is dated and signed by staff completing the checks (NMS 26.8)
- ensure risk assessments are completed identifying the hazard in relation to the home's premises estimating the level of risk in i.e. hot water taps, fire exit signage and first floor windows with the action taken to reduce risk to an acceptable level to avoid unnecessary hazards (MS 26.2)