

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspection date</b>	25 August 2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Lindy Latreille
<b>Type of Inspection</b>	Key

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	29 January 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 a detached house in a residential community, near to the seaside towns.

It provides accommodation for up to three young people aged between 12 and 18 years who require immediate accommodation due to placement breakdown or current crisis in their lives.

The Statement of Purpose is sent to placing authorities and inspection reports are made available. The children's guide is made available to the young person prior to admission.

### **Summary**

This was an unannounced social care inspection of all the key standards. This is a good service with some outstanding features.

There is significant therapeutic support for the young people so that they develop emotional stability, follow healthy lifestyles and develop maturity and independence skills.

The home works closely with therapeutic consultants and placing authorities to meet the identified needs of the young people.

The young people are actively engaged in education through a 24 hour curriculum soon after admission until re-integration into an education provision can be arranged.

Some policies and procedures have not been updated and monitoring not signed. Not all required notifications of events have been sent to Ofsted.

There is a culture that supports staff to improve their practice through training. The team are not 80% qualified.

Staff provide a strong commitment to support and enable each young person.

The level of individual support is very high.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

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

There were no actions from the last inspection, only recommendations.

Key working with young people is better recorded and planned to consider the targets and goals of each young person.

The alternative curriculum is evidenced on file and is framed to be supportive to nurture learning and emotional stability within the home.

The service remains encouraging and supportive to staff to achieve their required qualifications.

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

The provision is good.

The young people say that they enjoy their meals and their choices are included.

Menus sampled confirm a varied diet offered to the young people with many home cooked dishes. Consultation between director and the Registered Manager has produced an improved balance in the food offered; mostly with protein being included in a variety of breakfast menus and additional vegetables available for dinner. Lunches are generally packed to accommodate school or holiday activities.

Health care plans confirm an overview of individual needs but are not always clearly defining the actions to be taken. In some cases this is due to not receiving any report following looked after children's medical examination, only confirmation that all is alright. Health professionals involved with each young person are identified and staff facilitate all appointments.

Individual work that takes place to provide health promotion in relation to smoking, sexual health and hygiene has minimal recording or evidence of resources used.

Health monitoring is carried out but not related to developmental charts.

The health policy does not fully address the requirements of the standards and has not been updated.

There is a low level of medication administered in the home, mostly over the counter preparations. All are stored securely. Staff are trained and keep appropriate records.

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

The provision is good.

The privacy of the young people and the confidentiality of information is well managed. Telephone contact is supervised as required by the placing authorities. The young people do not have concerns in this area of care.

The young people know how and are able to raise a complaint and feel confident that they will be listened to. Complaints from the young people are few; some have emanated from neighbours and all follow procedure for investigation. There are none ongoing at present.

The Registered Manager is proactive is consulting with the Kent Local Safeguarding Children Board in the event of concerns. There have been three safeguarding enquiries initiated since the last inspection; all followed procedures. The file maintained is difficult to monitor as there is no chronology present for all incidents.

Staff supervision of the young people in their care is close and this lessens the opportunities for bullying. Staff expect the young people to be kind to each other and are swift to challenge unkind behaviour. No young people have stated that they are affected by bullying within the home.

There have been a small number of young people absent without leave. Close supervision by staff is significant in the active management of this area of care.

Not all notifications have been made to Ofsted as required by regulations.

All physical interventions are recorded thoroughly, including if a light touch to guide is used rather than a full restraint. All recordings show that restraint is used when it is the only course of action in maintaining the safety of the young person. The young people are encouraged and do sign the log following the event which contributes to the necessary reflection and understanding of why events have occurred.

Sanctions are appropriate to age and are often a monetary reparation.

All staff are trained to respond with physical intervention as a last resort. Staff respond to each young person with consistency and positive encouragement.

The health and safety risk assessments were not able to be inspected as they were inadvertently left in the home's Welsh property following the recent holiday. They will be retrieved by next week and scrutiny will take place at the next inspection.

The control of substances hazardous to health file does not list all the chemicals used in the home or all their product information sheets.

There is a contract in place for the management of fire prevention. Drills and fire prevention equipment are routinely checked. The records do not show that following a drill both the time of the drill and the duration of the evacuation are recorded.

Staff personnel files are well organised and mostly complete in all aspects of recruitment. One staff member has a lapsed Criminal Records Bureau check.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The young people speak confidently about the positive effects of the care they receive, in relation to their emotional security and progress. They have strong professional relationships with their key workers but comment that they could discuss issues with any member of staff.

The Regulation 33 monthly visits offer an opportunity for the young people to speak to the visitor and this is recorded as positive.

The key worker sessions, therapy and wilderness work (a feature of the recent holiday), all contribute to the development of emotional stability.

All therapies, including equine therapy, are given in consultation with the placing social workers. The careful organisation of the daily schedule maximises the benefits for each young person.

Despite some long periods out of school all the young people are engaged in educational learning and achievement. The staff deliver a 24 hour alternative curriculum, that comprises literacy, numeracy, and life skills, in discussion with an education consultant. As confidence and emotional maturity develop, the young people are returning to off site education and enjoying their achievement.

A wide range of activities are offered to the young people and their preferences are always considered. As a director holds a pilot licence this is an experience offered to the young people. Permission for activities are on file.

## Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Care plans are written following the looked after children's plans as directed by the placing authorities. Some documentation is still being awaited and there is evidence of chasing emails on file. Care plans address the needs of the young people and are routinely reviewed.

There is no documented evidence of young people's involvement in the review of care plans; though all the young people are familiar with their plans for their future and have been part of the consultation.

Reviews are supported by in-depth reports from the Registered Manager to update progress. The young people are encouraged to attend their reviews. The staff work closely to offer support, as for some young people this is a considerable challenge.

Contact is well supported and recorded by the service with involvement of families in the progress of the young people. Staff provide consistent support for the young people prior to contact and where supervised, reports observe the emotional ability of each young person to handle their behaviour during and after contact.

Admissions are planned and visits by young people take place in a majority of arrangements.

Future plans are developing, in consultation with young people, for their living arrangements after leaving the home. The consultation is directed by the placing authorities and at the young person's pace.

Children's meetings take place daily on most occasions and are recorded. This provides a basis for good relationships with staff and key workers.

From conversations with the young people, and observation in the home, staff are consistent in their attention and professional in their responses. This ensures that all the young people are listened to and involved in making relevant choices.

## Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is satisfactory.

No young person is at present involved in a Pathway Plan as this is put in place at the last review prior to the sixteenth birthday. As appropriate, placing social workers formulate the plan in consultation with the young people and the Registered Manager.

The home is generally well maintained. The front garden has an in and out arrangement for cars, with parking on the roadside as well. The front door shows signs of damage and repainting is scheduled. The wooden frames around replacement windows are rotten; quotes are being sought. The laundry floor is also scheduled for improvement.

Internally the home offers personalised single bedrooms on the first floor for the young people and adequate communal space downstairs. There is a large and enclosed rear garden.

## Organisation

The organisation is good.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The staff team is diverse in ethnicity, age and gender. The home has limited resources and artefacts. Cultural meals are planned and served. Festivals celebrated are generally traditional. Significant resources are used to ensure that the young people experience memorable celebrations for their birthdays.

The Statement of Purpose clarifies the therapeutic aspects of care in the home and the range of experience of the staff team. Not all consultants are listed.

The children's guide is informative but young people with poor literacy skills might find it a challenge.

The service has an experienced staff team with many skills. Six staff are following the required childcare qualification as the team does not meet the mandatory 80% qualified. The staff team is depleted at present; staff are working long hours and the Registered Manager is working shifts. This affects their ability to progress with their qualifications, but has not affected the individual time spent with the young people. Bank and agency staff are being used appropriately as required by regulation.

Staffing levels are being maintained and recent recruitment will ease the situation when Criminal Records Bureau checks are returned. Staff sleeping in overnight are generally of both gender.

The directors of the service are experienced and qualified in therapeutic care of young people and often in the home to advise and consult with the Registered Manager. Some staff have academic qualifications very relevant to childcare.

The consistency of care delivered to the young people has been maintained by staff working long shifts.

A range of training is available and the Registered Manager ensures that staff are current and competent in core aspects. There is a matrix showing achieved and planned training which demonstrates good management.

Monthly visits are carried out as required and a detailed report is written for the Registered Manager. This visit provided an occasion for the young people to speak in confidence. Identified shortfalls noted in previous Regulation 33 visits have not all been addressed as staff are stretched to maintain appropriate staffing levels.

The Registered Manager prepares a report quarterly which is presented to the directors. Not all matters required by regulation are at present being addressed in the report; namely complaints, allegations and recruitment. There is no evidence of monthly monitoring of records by the Registered Manager.

Case recording is well managed and files are stored securely.

## **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 Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.



Standard	Action	Due date
33	ensure that records are monitored and signed monthly, and all matters contained in Schedule 6 are addressed in the review of quality of care report Regulation 34	26 October 2009
20	notify without delay the relevant persons or agencies of the matters set out in Schedule 5 in particular safeguarding enquiries Regulation 30 (1)	26 October 2009
33	ensure that all policies and procedures are in date Regulation 34 (1) (b)	25 January 2010

## Recommendations

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

- ensure that all consultants are included in the Statement of Purpose (NMS 1)
- ensure that 80% of the staff team are qualified in childcare (NMS 29)
- ensure that all staff Criminal Records Bureau checks are renewed promptly (NMS 27)
- ensure that the time of a fire drill and the duration of the evacuation are recorded (NMS 26)
- ensure that the control of substances hazardous to health file lists all the chemicals used in the home and also contains the product information safety sheet (NMS 26)