

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspection date</b>	22 September 2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Stephanie Omosevwerha
<b>Type of Inspection</b>	Random

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	13 May 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 provision is a purpose built children's home that is run by a local authority. It is situated in a residential area of a seaside town. The site where it is based also accommodates a home for older people and a sheltered housing development. The home is able to accommodate up to 14 children and young people of either sex, aged between four and under 18 years of age who have a learning disability including those who have additional more complex or challenging needs. The majority of children receive respite care but the home is also able to support children requiring longer-term care. In addition the home provides a day care service for up to 10 children during weekends and school holiday periods. The home is arranged into four living units with a fifth area used for day care. Each unit has single bedrooms, bath and toilet facilities and lounge/diners. Two units have a kitchen. One unit has been specially adapted for children with physical disabilities. Other facilities include a sensory room and an art/craft room. The home is built around a quadrangle which is used as a play area and has additional garden areas around the outside of the building.

There were 8 children accommodated at the time of this inspection.

### **Summary**

This was an unannounced interim inspection covering all the key standards in staying safe and some standards in organisation.

The home maintains a good standard of care to children and young people. The service provides both long stay and a valuable respite service where children are properly safeguarded and well cared for. The staff team is well trained with a good mix of skills that are appropriately matched to the children's needs. An excellent multi-agency approach is taken to behaviour management with evidence that this has achieved positive improvements to children's behaviour. Parents have a high degree of confidence in the service and one parent commented, "its been crucial for our peace of mind that 'my child' is appropriately cared for during his short breaks, which he clearly is".

Two recommendations from the previous inspection concerning staff supervision and appraisals have not been fully met and are carried forward in this report. A further two recommendations regarding staff being clear about measures applied to unacceptable behaviour and updating staff fire training have been made as a result of this inspection.

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 four recommendations made at the previous inspection covering suitably adapted transport, staff supervision, staff annual appraisals and National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) training.

The home has made arrangements with a local school and has been able to borrow suitable transport over the school holiday period. Further transport is available through the local authority at weekends and evenings ensuring all children have access to suitable leisure activities.

The manager has begun to catch up with supervision sessions and annual appraisals that did not take place over the summer holidays due to senior management sickness and increasing demands for respite during this period. These recommendations will be carried forward and assessed at the next inspection to ensure recommended frequencies have been achieved.

A strong commitment to providing professional training has led to an increase in qualified staff in the home. Provision of internal NVQ training has made it easier for staff to access the course and also increased the relevance of the teaching to the skills and competencies they need to work in the home.

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

The provision is not judged.

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

The provision is good.

Staff are aware of the need to protect children's privacy and dignity whilst providing the support and supervision required to ensure children remain safe. Staff are clear about their responsibilities for maintaining confidentiality and when it may be necessary to share information. There is clear information about how to make a complaint and staff promote open dialogue with parents and carers enabling them to feel confident about raising concerns. No complaints have been made in respect of the service since the previous inspection and four parents have made a point of sending compliments about the care their children have received.

Children are properly safeguarded in the home with robust policies and procedures in place. As the home is owned by the local authority, it has strong links with the local safeguarding children's board and staff can access training to ensure they are fully aware of how to respond to any allegations. There is no evidence of absconding due to high staffing levels and vigilant supervision of children at all times.

Staff receive appropriate training in behaviour management, have a good knowledge of children's individual behaviour and are confident about strategies to de-escalate potential challenges. In addition, multi agency support is available, with professional visits to the home provided on a regular basis to offer advice and guidance on behaviour management. This approach has been effective in stabilising behaviour and there has been a reduction of the number of physical interventions needed. Bullying is also dealt with through behaviour management strategies as this tends to present as behaviours, such as hair pulling, biting and scratching that are linked to autistic tendencies rather than pre-meditated bullying. Generally, sanctions are appropriately recorded and monitored, however, one incident had not been further investigated to ensure the member of staff was clear about the measures applied to unacceptable behaviour.

The home provides a safe environment with regular checks and servicing ensuring the premises is well maintained and hazard free. Suitable fire precautions are in place, however, fire training was overdue for some staff. Recruitment procedures are robust ensuring children are effectively safeguarded by thorough background checks being carried out on staff prior to working in the home.

### **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 good.

The home is well run and effectively organised with a clear management and team structure. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and know who is accountable for their support. Shifts are organised to ensure a senior manager is available at all times to provide staff with support and guidance in their daily practice. Formal supervision and appraisals have still not been achieved at the recommended frequencies due to senior management sickness and the school holiday period generating a high demand for the respite service. This has meant the home has had to prioritise offering a full time service to the children accommodated with less time for staff and managers to formally meet.

Children benefit from a mixed staff team, who have a good range of skills and experience. The home has been strongly committed to achieving a qualified workforce and is now well on track to achieve this target. The provision of good quality training linked to the needs of the children accommodated has equipped staff with the knowledge and competencies they need to work confidently in the home. This has been particularly important due to the increasing need to provide care to children with more complex and challenging needs. Good staffing levels provide children with the care and attention they need. Low numbers of staff turnaround contributes to consistency of care with positive relationships formed between children and staff.

## 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 the consequences of unacceptable behaviour are clear to staff and any measure applied are relevant to the incident. (NMS 22.4)
- update staff fire training at frequencies agreed with the local fire authority. (NMS 26.8)
- carry out supervision of all care staff at the recommended frequency of one session each month. (NMS 28.2)
- ensure all staff have their performance individually and formally appraised at least annually by their line manager. (NMS 28.7)