

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspection date</b>	17 June 2010
<b>Inspector</b>	Elaine Cray
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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	18 December 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 service is a residential school and registered as a children's home to provide care for 34 young people of either sex between the ages 11 and 17 years with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The service is owned by a private company. The school is a large detached property, with the residential services located in a separate building. The service is set in extensive grounds. The residential facilities are split into six houses within one building. Each house has a lounge, dining room, kitchen and two bathrooms, including shower facilities. There are either five or six single bedrooms for young people in each house. The service has sports facilities and also accesses resources in the local and wider community. The home is located in a small village and has its own transport. Public transport from the local village provides links to further public transport and facilities in the wider community.

### **Summary**

This inspection is an unannounced full key inspection visit, looking at all the key national minimum standards. The outcome groups relating to being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, economic wellbeing and organisation are assessed and judged as good. The outcomes for positive contribution are assessed and judged as satisfactory. The service has not provided consistent information about the day-to-day care arrangements in placement care plans, including full details about the contact arrangements for young people. Overall the quality rating is good.

This service opened six months previous to this first inspection. The service provides a structured, nurturing and energetic environment for young people and behaviour is well managed. There are clear boundaries, consistent reward and celebration for improved behaviour with a clear focus on education. Young people acknowledge the progress they are making at the home. Children are provided with good opportunities to develop both educationally and emotionally. Young people say they feel safe. They are protected by clear procedures and looked after by well-trained staff.

Two actions and two recommendations are set as a result of this inspection visit.

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.

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

The provision is good.

Young people's health and medical needs are promoted and organised with well-recorded health care plans which show that young people's medical appointments are arranged and their health closely monitored. Staff have a good understanding of the health issues relating to young people and they are supported to lead healthy lifestyles. The manager and staff liaise with relevant health agencies and make consistent efforts to encourage young people to take more responsibility and have a greater awareness for their own health care arrangements.

Health care plans identify a clear assessment of need and records of key work sessions show young people talk about their health, which is improved from no longer smoking, eating a more healthy diet and doing more exercise since living at the home. While there are improvements in the health and medical needs of young people, there are some gaps in recording of information. This is because some day-to-day details and practice are not updated in the health care plan or represented in the young people's placement care plan.

Staff have a good knowledge of the young people's medication requirements. Medication procedures are organised and implemented to ensure young people benefit from safe practice and health needs are addressed. Records are well maintained. Staff are trained in first aid.

Young people like the food and they say healthy eating is promoted and discussed with them. Menus are varied and include a range of choice. Mealtimes are well organised both in the central kitchen and dining room during school time and in the houses at tea-time and weekends.

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

The provision is good.

Young people are protected by effectively managed procedures and practices for promoting their welfare and safety. There is a thorough and robust staff recruitment and selection process and all care staff are trained in safeguarding children procedures. However safeguarding children training has not been extended to ancillary staff. Staff are fully aware of the procedures regarding young people going missing and who to notify about serious incidents in the home.

There are written behaviour management policies and procedures. Staff are trained in behaviour management and physical intervention. There are clear boundaries and an emphasis on promoting incentives and rewarding positive and improved behaviour. All young people spoken with on this inspection say their behaviour is improved. They are clear about what happens when their behaviour does not go so well, saying they can be grounded or have to repay money for damage they cause to the home. Young people feel these consequences are fair. They are particularly proud of the praise, rewards and incentives that they receive for their efforts and achievements. Records are maintained and show good accountability for when sanctions and physical intervention are used in the home. Young people are protected and supported by staff who promote and implement effective risk and behaviour management strategies in their day-to-day practice. However young people's placement care plans and risk management documents lack detail about the good practices in the home.

The privacy of young people is respected and young people enjoy their own private space. Young people understand and are protected by the clear written complaints procedure and the additional information included in the young people's guide. The manager shows a good level of commitment to listening to and ensuring young people's concerns are taken seriously. There is an anti-bullying policy and young people say they feel protected because bullying is not allowed and there are consequences if it happens in the home.

The physical environment is well maintained and monitored in terms of health and safety, with comprehensive and detailed documentation. Fire safety procedures are checked, monitored and young people know what to do if there is a fire.

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

The provision is good.

Young people's individual needs are identified and supported by staff who present a clear and enthusiastic commitment to developing individuality and supporting and encouraging young people to enjoy and achieve in both educational and leisure activities. Young people develop confidence in their personal identities, social relationships and academic achievements.

Needs are assessed on an individual basis and support is afforded to each young person. Staff are sensitive to young people's needs and their own ways of doing things. Staff provide individual support in individual key working sessions and also liaise with appropriate agencies in terms of more specialised needs. Records relating to one-to-one key working sessions show sessions are regularly held but these are not always consistent with the young person's placement care plans.

The home offers full-time education to young people and has its own well resourced school. There is a strong educational ethos and all young people attend school. They wear a school uniform, have clear education plans and receive systematic support and reward for their achievements. The education and care staff promote excellent opportunities in education, leisure activities and personal development to fully support young people's achievements. Many young people acknowledge they have not attended or have had difficulties within the education system. They are extremely positive about the education support and progress they are making at the home's school. Young people's work and certificates are displayed throughout the school and in their bedrooms. They are also motivated by the range of activities available to them. Staff are fully committed to providing and supporting young people to try out different opportunities and they enjoy sport, cycling, quad biking, group games, playing chess, cooking, art, craft work and going out on a variety of trips.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people are supported and cared for by staff who have a good knowledge of their needs. Staff provide consistent care on a day-to-day basis resulting in improvement in the welfare, behaviour and safeguarding of all young people living at the home. Young people have placement care plans and their files have comprehensive information and show good practice and support from staff. However, the information in the placement care plans does not fully inform staff about or represent the actual day-to-day support and care for young people. Young people are supported to develop and maintain contact with family and friends but full details of these arrangements are not documented.

Young people know about their placement care plans and their plans for the future. However there is no section in the plans for young people to indicate they have read, understood and agreed with the written plans. They say they regularly meet with and get on well with their key worker and have opportunities to discuss their needs, views, wishes and to attend meetings. Young people are involved in the running of the home. They have daily catch up meetings after school and have weekly young people's meetings to discuss how each house is run.

Young people are supported when they move into the home, saying they receive a young person's guide which is explained with their key worker. There are clear and supportive admission procedures and young people say they have settled in well because the staff are helpful.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

While there are no young people old enough to be engaged with specific independence preparation programmes, they are encouraged to take responsibility for domestic chores, including keeping their room tidy, helping at mealtimes and sorting out their laundry. Young people are encouraged to budget their pocket money and set up savings accounts.

Young people live in a well-maintained and comfortable home. There are six separate houses located in one building. Each house has its own lounge, dining room and kitchen. All areas are well decorated and furnished. Young people's bedrooms are well maintained and personalised. The house and school is located in extensive grounds and there are sound security arrangements.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Young people are looked after in a service that is well managed and promotes their needs, safety and welfare. Young people and others are informed about the home with an up-to-date Statement of Purpose and young people's guide. Young people say staff help them understand how the home is run.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Discussion with staff shows that understanding and tolerance of difference is promoted and discriminatory behaviour and bullying is challenged and addressed. The staff team provide a clear commitment and environment of care to meet the needs of all young people currently living at the home. This extends to future young people who may come from diverse backgrounds.

This home opened six months previous to this inspection and there is a clear focus on recruiting, maintaining and developing a stable staff team. These efforts are demonstrated as young people are looked after by competent, confident and well-trained staff. They generally have a good understanding of the needs of the young people and knowledge of the policies, procedures and recording systems in the home. The staff team has good levels of experience and the rota makes sure that new staff are supported by more experienced staff. Staffing arrangements are good and sufficient in number to provide good quality care so the young people can progress and achieve in their placements. Handover meetings are held daily and staff meetings are regular. Shifts are covered by two consistent teams and there are identified team and shift leaders for each shift. Training is well organised, staff say they have received effective induction, including regular and supportive supervision.

The service is monitored through independent Regulation 33 visits, monthly checks by the manager and regular management and staff meetings.

Each child has a permanent and private file, which is comprehensive, well organised and shows a clear record of each young person's progress. There is the noted exception of the lack of detail in young people's placement care plans and risk management documents.

## **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
26	ensure strategies to eliminate identified risks to the health or safety of children accommodated in the home are documented in young people's risk assessments (Regulation 23 (c))	6 August 2010
2	ensure the placement care plan for each young person sets out clearly the assessed needs, the objectives of the placement, how these are to be met by the registered person on a day-to-day basis and the contribution made by staff at the home. (Regulation 12)	6 August 2010

## Recommendations

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

- ensure each child has a clear written health plan within their placement plan (NMS 12.2)
- ensure contact arrangements, including restrictions are detailed in the placement care plan. (NMS 4.2)