

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspection date</b>	8 June 2010
<b>Inspector</b>	Jane Rushby
<b>Type of Inspection</b>	Key

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	3 March 2010
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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

This children's home is a two-storey home set in a rural location, close to a market town. The home provides long term care to young people of either gender aged between 10 and 18 years. Admission to the home can be on an emergency or a planned basis. The home provides a service for young people who are in need of care and support with emotional and behavioural needs.

The home provides ground floor accommodation comprising of a lounge, kitchen, dining room, utility room, staff sleeping-in room and office. On the first floor are four bedrooms and two bathrooms. There is a garden with car parking to the front of the building.

### Summary

This unannounced key inspection was conducted as part of the planned inspection programme. All key national minimum standards were inspected. This is a satisfactory service with good features. Young people's needs are effectively assessed and recorded. They are well supported when moving into and leaving the home. Improvements have been made to systems and practice which promote the safety of the young people, and they feel safe living here. Staff enable young people to develop a respect for difference and promote the inclusion of all. There is a new manager and a stable and experienced staff team. There are three recommendations arising from this inspection. These relate to shortfalls in recording young people's views when disciplinary measures are used, a shortfall in consultation with young people during the regulation 33 visits and shortfalls in the content and recording of staff meetings. There were three young people living at the home at the time of this visit and they all participated in the inspection.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

### Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the registered person was asked to ensure that action is taken to obtain information about the whereabouts of any child who should go missing and to try to ensure the safety and welfare of that child. This has been carried out in full. Where young people have placed themselves at risk through their behaviour they have been fully protected by an effective understanding of the risks and an appropriate response involving external agencies.

The registered person was also asked to ensure that written records be kept of any allegation of abuse or neglect and of the action taken in response. There have been no such allegations since the previous visit. There is an adequate process in place to respond to allegations, management have identified a shortfall in child protection training and measures are in place to address this. This standard is met.

The registered person was asked to ensure that events listed under schedule 5 shall notified without delay. This has been met: all relevant matters have been notified to Ofsted.

The registered person was asked to address shortfalls relating to risk assessment and management. This has been carried out in full. Thorough risk assessments are in place and these are regularly reviewed. Staff are knowledgeable about risk and react appropriately to

protect young people where they engage in risky behaviour. A shortfall in respect of staff recruitment has also been addressed.

## **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Young people benefit from a well balanced and nutritious diet and regular meals. Staff are aware of young people's likes and dislikes and weekly menus are chosen at resident's meetings. Fresh fruit and vegetables are provided daily. Young people are encouraged to prepare and cook meals. One commented 'I help with cooking on Fridays and other days when I can'. Meals are a social occasion, an opportunity to encourage young people to develop their communication skills. Cultural, religious and special dietary needs are catered for.

Young people's health is promoted well and their needs are recorded thoroughly in health care plans. Staff support young people to attend medical appointments and work hard to enable them to understand the importance of good health and when to seek advice. A young person said 'they took me to the doctor last week, staff persuaded me to go'. Staff provide advice and guidance about sexual health and relationships, and they promote self-esteem through key work and group sessions. Young people are encouraged to engage in active sports as a means to developing a healthy lifestyle. Smoking is discouraged. Medication is safely administered and securely stored.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people's privacy is respected and information is confidentially handled. Young people's bedrooms are respected as their private space which they can lock. Young people's records are securely stored in the office. Staff receive training relating to privacy and confidentiality during their induction. Young people feel confident about their privacy, one said 'I have the privacy I need here, staff respect this'.

Young people know how to make a complaint and feel confident that complaints will be addressed effectively. One said 'if you complain they look into it and tell you what they're going to do'. Young people are given information about children's rights organisations and how to contact them. Complaints received at the home since the last visit have been thoroughly investigated with a clear outcome.

Young people are protected from bullying by clear expectations of behaviour and a high level of staff supervision. Young people were confident that bullying could be challenged and that staff would support them to do this. A young person said 'I feel protected by staff, there are enough of them here'. Staff plan activities carefully to promote positive relationships. Managers have recognised a shortfall in child protection training and have devised a new training programme. Staff have an adequate understanding of how to respond to allegations or disclosures or abuse and feel confident that they have access to management support in any safeguarding matter. Young people said they feel safe at the home. A typical comment was 'I feel safe here, they care about us'. Young people who go missing are protected by a robust awareness of the risks involved and effective liaison with police and other services.

Young people are supported to develop socially acceptable behaviour through a constructive staff response to inappropriate behaviour. Clear expectations of behaviour are agreed during

the planning process and young people sign a behaviour contract. Staff are skilled at dealing with very challenging behaviours and their approach is based on establishing positive relationships with young people. Young people work to achievable targets and can earn monetary rewards for positive behaviour and adhering to routines. A young person said 'we get three chances, which is fair'. Sanctions are used appropriately and physical intervention is used rarely. The views of young people have not always been recorded in the log in the space for this purpose. The staff team meet regularly to discuss behaviour management strategies and make adjustments as required to achieve positive outcomes.

Young people are protected by good health and safety procedures. Regular fire checks are conducted by staff. Young people participate in fire drills and are fully aware of the evacuation procedure. A risk assessment process is in place for individual young people and specific activities, and staff have a thorough knowledge of the risks involved. A previous shortfall in the standard of the recruitment process has been addressed, however no new staff have been recruited since the last inspection. Visitors to the home are vetted to ensure the safety of young people.

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

The provision is good.

Young people benefit from individually tailored support provided by key workers. Staff work to build sound relationships with all the young people as a basis for facilitating positive change. Staff have a good knowledge of the individual needs of young people and work hard to promote respect for difference and facilitate the inclusion of all. Placement plans identify any religious ethnic or cultural needs. Young people recognise the positive opportunities provided by the placement. Specialist support is sought for any specific problems or issues that young people have. Risk assessments allow young people to take controlled risks appropriate to their age in order to develop independence skills.

Young people's educational needs are effectively assessed and recorded. Where young people do not have an education placement they are provided with a home tutor who works with them two days a week. Staff work imaginatively to promote learning, and educational activities are provided each day. Young people are supported to engage in further education. One said 'They have helped me think about courses. I have applied'. The home offers a good range of new experiences to broaden young people's knowledge and skills through leisure activities in the local community.

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

The provision is good.

Young people benefit from thorough assessments of their health, social, emotional and behavioural needs. Staff liaise effectively with involved professionals to produce care and health plans. Young people meet with staff at the planning stage when the expectations of behaviour and routines are explained. Young people have a clear idea about the aims of the placement. Young people's progress is discussed with them in regular key working sessions. Young people are supported to attend statutory reviews. A young person said 'I can talk easily at my review, staff will support me'.

Young people are assisted to maintain contact with families and friends. Staff will facilitate contact with young people's families by providing transport and escorts where required. Young people are assisted to travel independently using public transport where appropriate.

Young people moving into the home are well supported and prepared. One said 'I didn't want to come here but it's better than I thought'. On moving in they are encouraged to take responsibility for decorating and furnishing their bedrooms which provides an opportunity to engage in an activity whilst being supported to express their feelings about the move. Young people preparing to leave the home are provided with support, including assistance from external agencies.

Young people benefit from effective consultation and are supported to make decisions about their lives. Resident's meetings are held weekly. Young people feel confident about approaching staff with problems, one said 'I can talk to staff any time, I'm full on listened to'. As a result of consultation, some changes have been made to the decoration of the house. Staff provide one-to-one key working time to enable young people to be consulted on an individual basis.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Young people receive good care which promotes improved life chances and preparation for adulthood. Young people are supported to modify their behaviour, access health care and education and develop life and independence skills. Progress in all these areas is regularly reviewed. Young people recognise the benefits of the encouragement they receive and how it will help them in the future. Young people who have left the home contact staff regularly for telephone support.

Young people are provided with accommodation which is decorated and furnished to a good standard. There is a sufficient communal space both inside and out. Young people were pleased with their bedrooms and were seen to be enjoying games in the garden during this visit.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Young people's complex, individual and diverse needs are well assessed and regularly monitored. Staff have a good understanding of equality issues and support young people to increase their knowledge of the wider world and develop a respect for difference. Young people are supported to make changes to their lifestyles and behaviours which promote their positive inclusion within the wider community.

The Statement of Purpose provides useful general information about the services and facilities available and the young person's guide summarises this information in a useful and accessible way.

Young people benefit from being cared for by sufficient experienced, appropriately qualified and competent staff. A new and experienced manager has recently started in post and has begun to develop an understanding of the staff team and their development needs. Effective processes and systems for recording information are in place. Staff are supervised at required intervals and report feeling well supported in their roles. Staff meetings have been held regularly but records are scant with no agenda or review of the homes practices recorded. Staff have

either completed or are enrolled on the relevant national vocational qualification. There is adequate handover time to ensure effective communication between shifts. Staffing levels are increased to reflect the changing needs or numbers of young people when required.

There is a shortfall in the regulation 33 monitoring which does not always reflect that the views of young people have been sought and also previous recommendations have not been followed up in each case. The new manager has carried out a thorough regulation 34 monitoring, which has addressed all required areas and has addressed any shortfalls identified. Young people have permanent records of their progress which are securely stored.

## 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 that when disciplinary measures or restraint are used, children are encouraged to write or have their views recorded and sign their names against them, in the records kept by the home (NMS 22.14)
- ensure staff meetings include discussion of the home's work in caring for individual children and the management of the current child group, together with review of the home's practices. Meetings should have an agenda (NMS 28.10)
- ensure that regulation 33 visits provide an opportunity for any child or member of staff who so chooses to meet the visitor (in private if they wish) and ensure that action is taken by the registered person on recommendations or issues of concern raised in such reports. (NMS 32.2 and 32.3)