

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspector</b>	Monica Hargreaves
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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 home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six young people of either gender, aged from four years to 17 years old. The home accommodates children with physical disabilities and complex health needs.

The property is a single storey building attached to a day nursery provision. It is situated in a residential area of a town. The home provides young people with individual bedrooms, a communal lounge with dining area, bathrooms and a kitchen. A room situated off the lounge is the staff office. There is an enclosed garden area to the front of the home. The home is situated close to local amenities. There is access to local leisure facilities and shops.

There were four young people living at the home at the time of the inspection.

### Summary

At this unannounced full inspection, the key standards in all outcome areas were assessed. The recommendation made at the last interim inspection was also considered.

The service provides a good standard of care and has some areas of real strength. Thorough assessments and detailed person-centred care plans enable staff to make sure that young people's needs are identified and met. Young people's complex health needs are met very well because staff are trained in specific areas of care so that they understand and can meet those needs. Staff have strong links with a number of health professionals outside the home, so that young people have prompt access to additional services when a need is identified. The education of young people is promoted very well and they are encouraged to achieve to their individual potential.

Young people are cared for safely in the home. There are sound care practices which are underpinned by robust policies and procedures. These ensure that young people are safe and cared for in a way that promotes their personal dignity.

The home is managed effectively. There are robust systems in place for monitoring and reviewing practice which promote positive outcomes for young people. Staff are competent, qualified and appropriately trained for their work. They have a positive view of the young people they look after and work to achieve the best outcomes for them.

One good practice recommendation has been made as a result of this inspection. This relates to the records made of fire drills.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

### Improvements since the last inspection

One recommendation was made at the last inspection. This is met. The organisation has a clear commitment to ensuring that staff hold a relevant qualification and there are now more than 80% of the staff team who have achieved this. This means that young people are looked after by staff who are qualified and trained to understand their needs.

## Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

There are highly effective arrangements for making sure that the good health of young people is promoted in the home. Staff have an excellent understanding of the complex health needs of the young people in their care and they are trained in specific areas of health care such as the management of epilepsy, the safe delivery of oxygen and ventilator care. This enables them to make sure that young people are looked after safely. Detailed health plans are put in place for each young person. These address all aspects of the young person's health needs, for example, nutrition, sleep patterns, hygiene and medication. Plans are monitored closely to make sure that the information on young people's continuing and changing health needs is kept up to date and accurate. Plans and daily records support consistency of care across the team.

Staff support young people at all their health appointments and they have strong links with professionals in health agencies outside the home. This ensures that multi-agency working is effective and supports the work that staff do in the home to promote the health and well-being of the young people they look after. Young people themselves say that staff look after them very well and make sure that they are healthy.

Care staff are very aware of the importance of a balanced diet to the well-being of young people and promote healthy eating in the home. They provide nutritious foods for those young people who are able to eat meals and involve them in choosing menus. There are clear regimes in place for all young people who are fed by gastric tube, so that staff ensure that they are properly nourished. Staff monitor the weight of young people and work closely with dieticians and paediatric consultants, when there are specific issues of concern about young people.

The home has highly effective systems to manage medication, which promote the safety of young people. For example, all staff are trained in medication procedures and have a good knowledge of the medications young people take, including the possible side effects. Medicines are securely stored and are checked by two staff when they are given out to young people. This procedure protects young people. Records are detailed and up to date. They are routinely checked by the manager and senior staff to ensure that there are no errors. Staff are trained in first aid procedures so that they know how to look after young people safely in an emergency.

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

The provision is good.

Young people are cared for safely in the home because there are sound policies and procedures to guide staff and care practices are good. For example, young people are protected from abuse because staff are trained to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and they understand how to manage and report safeguarding concerns.

Staff understand how those young people who do not use speech, communicate their views. They make sure that young people's right to privacy and confidentiality is respected and that personal care is given in a way that promotes privacy and respects the dignity of young people, so that they feel safe in the care of staff.

The complaints systems is robust, which ensures that any issues that are raised are dealt with promptly. Young people say that they know how to complain and they are confident that staff

deal with complaints properly. Staff advocate well on behalf of young people. Records show that there has been one complaint since the last inspection. This was responded to promptly, thoroughly investigated and the outcome was made known to the complainant. Records also collate the compliments that the home receives from individuals and organisations.

Young people say that they do not feel there is any bullying in the home. However, staff remain vigilant to the possibility that this could happen and they make sure that young people are protected. Risk assessments enable staff to identify possible concerns and to put in place appropriate strategies to protect and support young people. Appropriate staffing levels ensure that young people are supervised.

Due to the level of their disabilities and their complex needs, the majority of young people are not able to leave the home unsupervised. Young people who are more independently mobile are encouraged to accept staff support if they leave the home. There have not been any incidents of young people going missing from the home, although staff are aware of the home's procedure and the action to take should this happen.

Young people benefit from living in a home that is kept safe. Risk assessments ensure that potential hazards are eliminated or minimised; equipment is kept safe because it is regularly checked and serviced. Young people are protected from the risk of fire because staff are trained in fire evacuation procedures and there are regular fire drills. Although records are kept of all drills, these do not include the actual time. This means that there is no written confirmation that a drill has taken place at night and that staff have been able to practice an evacuation in the hours of darkness.

Young people are encouraged and supported to behave well and there is clear evidence from records that they do. Staff develop behaviour management plans for individual young people if there are specific issues of concern so that they can be supported appropriately. Sanctions are not used to manage behaviour, but young people are encouraged with rewards and incentives. There is a 'no restraint' policy in place in the home and staff are trained in the use of de-escalation techniques. Young people report that they 'get on' well with each other and during the inspection, relationships between young people and between young people and staff were seen to be positive.

The organisation's recruitment process is robust and ensures that all prospective staff are vetted and assessed as suitable before they start work at the home. The identity of all visitors to the home is checked before they are allowed in. These systems protect young people and promote their welfare.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Young people receive an excellent level of individual support that meets their diverse needs. Placement plans that are based on thorough assessments, ensure that young people's needs are properly identified and also enable staff to work consistently to meet them. Staff understand how different young people communicate their wishes and feelings and work with them to develop their communication skills. Young people benefit from the established and effective key working system, which ensures that an identified member of the care team takes responsibility for progressing their plans. Staff have very strong links with a range of professionals outside the home, so that young people have prompt access to additional support,

when a need is identified. Staffing levels are sufficient to allow young people to spend time with staff to secure the individual support and assistance they need to achieve good outcomes.

The value of education is promoted very well in the home and young people are supported to attend school or college every day. Care staff work closely with schools and colleges to ensure that young people can achieve the best possible educational outcome. They attend education reviews and communicate regularly with teaching staff, so that they have a good understanding of the work that young people are doing and of how they can support them to achieve their targets. Staff also work closely with speech and language therapists to ensure that young people have the support they need to promote their communication skills and their general education. Staff have a very positive view of the young people they look after and celebrate all their achievements. Young people have access to facilities in the home that support their learning, such as a computer, books and games.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The care that young people need is detailed in individual person-centred care plans. These documents are clear and focused and are underpinned by robust individual risk assessments. Care plans are monitored in the home and the care of young people is discussed in staff team meetings. This ensures that all staff are well informed about meeting young people's needs and that there is consistency in the care young people are given. The care of young people is also monitored through the statutory reviewing process to ensure that the placement continues to meet the young person's needs. Key workers provide reports for reviews and attend meetings. They take notes of the actions from reviews, so that care plans can be updated immediately. This is good practice.

Staff work to promote young people's contact with family and friends, when it is safe and in their best interests to do so. They liaise closely with placing authorities to ensure that contact plans are up to date and they provide practical and emotional support to young people to ensure contact takes place. This helps young people to keep in touch with family and friends outside the home who are important to them and it promotes the young person's sense of identity.

Young people move into and leave the service in a planned way so that they are properly supported. A detailed assessment is undertaken when a young person is referred for a service to ascertain whether or not their needs can be met in the home. Clear information is retained in the home to confirm how the decisions have been reached. Young people who live in the home have significant needs and there is good evidence of the work that staff do with young people, their families and placing authorities, to ensure that there are plans in place to support young people as they move from the home.

Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring that there is good consultation with young people and their families, as well as with professionals involved with the home. They are skilled at understanding how young people make their views known and advocate well on their behalf. This ensures that the wishes and feelings of young people are taken into account in their daily care. Staff also talk regularly to families, placing social workers and other professionals about the care young people receive in the home and about their ongoing needs. This enables them to develop the service in response to the views expressed to them.

## Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The daily routines in the home encourage young people to develop life skills, to make choices and to be as independent as they can be. For example, young people are encouraged and supported to use public transport, to choose and shop for their own clothes and other personal items and, if they are able, to learn how to make their own appointments. Staff work with placing authorities to try to ensure that transition plans are put in place at an early stage. There is good evidence in the home to confirm the discussions that take place with placing authorities and health services, although there can at times be some delay in identifying suitable placements for young people when they reach 18 years. There are at present two young people who are over 18 years old living in the home and the manager is continuing to work with authorities to help these young people move on into appropriate adult services.

Young people benefit from living in an environment that is well maintained, internally and externally. The home is comfortably furnished, well equipped, clean and tidy. There is sufficient communal and private space for the number and needs of young people accommodated. Young people are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms, with the support of their families and staff and their bedrooms reflect their individual preferences. Young people comment that they like the home and feel safe and happy there.

## Organisation

The organisation is good.

Good information about the home is made available to young people, families and professionals involved with the service. The Statement of Purpose is a clear and detailed document that accurately describes how young people are looked after. The young person's guide is currently produced in simple language and pictures, which is a format that is appropriate for those living in the home. The manager is developing a form of the young person's guide in video to enable young people to have access to information on computer screens.

Young people benefit from being looked after by a competent team of staff who are appropriately trained and qualified for their work. They are well supported by an experienced and qualified manager, who has completed an application for registration with Ofsted. There are appropriate arrangements in place for cover when the manager is absent from the home, to ensure that there is ongoing support for staff. Rotas confirm that there are sufficient staff on duty to care for young people safely. Gaps on the rota are covered by staff working additional hours or by staff from the organisation's own team of casual staff. This provides consistency and continuity for young people, as they are cared for by staff who are known to them. Young people themselves confirmed that they know all the staff who look after them and that they always know who is going to be on shift.

There are robust management systems in place which ensure that the care of young people is monitored. For example, the manager makes routine checks on records, staff supervision is regular and there are regular team meetings. The responsible individual visits the home every month to undertake checks on the work of the service. He provides clear reports of his findings. There is good evidence to confirm that prompt action is taken to address any shortfalls that are identified as a result of these checks.



The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Young people receive care in the service that meets their specific and diverse needs. Staff have a good understanding of the principles of equality and diversity and receive specific training to develop their knowledge. They are trained to understand the complex needs of the young people they look after, so that they provide care to young people which is individualised and meets their specific needs. Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to promoting choice and inclusion and to ensuring that disability is not seen as a barrier for young people's involvement in the decisions that are made about their care.

Documentation relating to young people is detailed and recording is of a good standard. Files include all the information required by the regulations and provide a secure record of young people's needs, development, progress and history. Files are stored securely and information is kept confidential.

## 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 the times of fire drills are recorded to evidence that one drill is held at night in each 12 month period. (NMS 26.8)