

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspection date</b>	23 June 2010
<b>Inspector</b>	Julian Parker
<b>Type of Inspection</b>	Random

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	5 February 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**

The home offers placements for up to five young people who may have a combination of mental health, psychological, emotional or complex care needs that present challenging behaviour. The service is designed to offer medium to long-term care placements. The home's programme of care incorporates a structured balance of education, recreation and therapeutic interventions tailored to meet individual needs.

Care is provided in a large detached, family-style house in an urban location. It has the benefit of easy access to the comprehensive range of recreational and leisure amenities in the local expanding new town. The house has been modernised and refurbished to offer a spacious living environment with individual rooms for young people.

### **Summary**

This was an unannounced interim inspection. Three young people are living in the home. Two were present during the inspection and participated in some of the process. The inspection focussed on areas relating to health needs, keeping young people safe, economic wellbeing and how staffing and management arrangements support the operation of the home.

The home is judged as satisfactory with some good features. Young people receive an individualised care package that is sufficiently flexible to adapt to their changing needs and keep them safe. The home is well decorated and maintained providing a homely environment in which to live. The registered person provides good direction and leadership that enables positive care from an enthusiastic staff team. Staff are clear about their roles and are consistent in carrying out their responsibilities to address the needs of young people in their care.

This inspection identifies the need for improvement in some of the home's health, health and safety and organisational records to fully confirm compliance with the national minimum standards.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

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

No actions or recommendations were made at the last inspection.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people are provided with choice and encouraged to contribute to menu planning and meal preparation at the home. Staff practically help and support young people by providing guidance and information that helps their understanding of what constitutes healthy eating and a balanced diet. A part time cook is employed and all staff receive training in food hygiene.

The health and psychological needs of young people are promoted by the home's procedures. Individual needs are identified and recorded in health plans. This is achieved through consulting with individual young people, their parents, appropriate health professionals and placing

authority social workers. Plans have not always been brought up to date with new information and this could prevent appropriate treatment being received.

Health, psychological and medical needs are practically addressed by the homes access to a range of local health professionals. On admission young people are quickly registered with local medical services and they can choose to attend health appointments with or without the support of staff. The home provides the young people with practical advice, guidance and support with healthy living, medical, emotional and sexual health matters consistent with their assessed needs and level of understanding.

All staff are trained in first aid and the administration of medication, which helps them keep young people safe and in good health.

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

The provision is good.

The welfare and physical safety of young people is promoted by staff following policies and adopting procedures and guidance that fully complies with regulatory requirements. Policies promote child protection, countering bullying, managing difficult behaviour and dealing with missing persons. They conform to the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and help ensure effective working with other agencies. The company provides statutory training that informs and equips staff to fully understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

Young people have their privacy respected. Personal information is securely stored and shared confidentially only with other professionals. Young people have access to a telephone that they can use in private. They are provided with their own lockable bedrooms and made aware of the particular circumstances in which these may need to be searched.

Young people know how to raise any concerns or complaints. Although the home has formal policies and procedures, concerns are usually addressed effectively long before they become a complaint. No formal complaints have been made by young people since the home started operating. Third parties' concerns are always addressed by the provider openly. Young people have access to independent representatives such as their social workers or advocates from a national children's advocacy service to help them make their views known. The home's complaints policy is usefully summarised in the young person's guide.

Young people are encouraged to develop socially acceptable behaviour within the boundaries set by normal living. Staff are trained in behaviour management and physical intervention. This training is regularly renewed to remain effective. Young people are aware of the expectations being made from them prior to moving to the home. The staff team understand the range of challenging behaviours individual young people may present and how these may be effectively addressed. The development of positive relationships between staff and young people helps promote and maintain a relaxed homely environment. All behavioural incidents are evaluated by the home's manager. The views and opinions of young people are always taken into account following any sanction which helps to improve the transparency and effectiveness of staff practice.

Staff confirm their awareness of potential dangers to young people by risk assessing all aspects of safety in the living environment, for example, the risk from fire and hazards presented by

behaviour and activities. The regularity of these checks does not always support the registered person's procedures for ensuring that young people are kept safe from fire.

There are effective procedures in place for the monitoring of visitors to the home. The company's recruitment and selection process registers that all appointments to post are thoroughly vetted confirming suitability for working with young people.

### **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 good.

Care is provided in a well renovated, large detached family house within easy reach of the town centre. It has convenient access to local recreation, leisure and further educational facilities that young people use to integrate into the wider community.

The property provides ample, homely, well-maintained accommodation for young people. This includes two reception rooms, a spacious lounge, five bedrooms for young people's use, a kitchen, utility, dining room, two bathrooms, WCs on both floors, staff office and a staff sleep-in room. There is an extensive conservatory offering year round recreation space.

The home is decorated, furnished and regularly maintained to a good standard providing young people multiple areas for relaxation, recreation, education and a degree of privacy. The garden provides sufficient outdoor private green space being separated from safe, off-road parking for vehicles by a fence and locked gate to increase the homes domestic security.

Young people are encouraged to personalise and look after their private space showing they take pride in their home.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The home's Statement of Purpose includes all the information prescribed by schedule 1 of the Children's Home Regulations thereby confirming what may be expected from the service provided. There is a children's guide that provides a useful source of information for young people placed at the home.

Young people are supported with their daily living by the home's team of enthusiastic and trained staff. Staff demonstrate commitment to providing safe and consistent care. The experienced and qualified Registered Manager and deputy manager support staff providing guidance and access to professional development opportunities. By attending induction and all statutory training staff are equipped to provide care specific to young people's particular needs. Permanent staff that have not gained a National Vocational Qualification at level 3 are registered and their skills are being assessed.

The staff rota confirms the complement of staff in the home is sufficient for providing for the care needs of the young people. Any shortfalls in the home's rota are covered by in-house staff. The arrangements for safe one-to-one work with young people are addressed by individual risk assessments to ensure both young people and staff safety. Importance is placed on regular staff supervision and appraisal of the workers to practically enhance the quality and consistency of day to day care. Some shortfalls in regularity and sign-off for this process undermines its aim and effectiveness.

There is a robust system for monitoring the operational efficiency and quality of care being provided by the home through the use of a regulation 33 visitor. Young peoples views contribute to this process and the reports findings are used to improve the service.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The young people living at the home receive an individualised service that provides care fitting to individual age, ability and specific mental health related risk. A mixed gender and background staff team display a good knowledge of the young people they are working with, including their cultural and disability needs. The home has developed explicit policies and procedures promoting equality and diversity in all aspects of its service.

Case files belonging to young people are securely stored and arranged in a manner that makes them accessible whilst retaining confidentiality. File records did not always contain a signature to confirm consistent management monitoring. Young people are made aware of the contents of their files and know they can request access to them should they need to.

## 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
12	ensure that children's health is promoted by compiling health plans that specify the present circumstances relating to young peoples access to medical or health treatment (Regulation 20(1))	14 July 2010
26	ensure that adequate precautions are taken against the risk of fire by the use of fire precautionary checks and drills that are conducted regularly and thoroughly recorded (Regulation 32(1)(c)(v))	14 July 2010
28	ensure that all staff receive appropriate regular recorded supervision. (Regulation 27)	14 July 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 reports retained within children's individual case files are signed off by the manager. (NMS 35.2)