

## Inspection report for Children's Home

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<b>Inspector</b>	Diane Thackrah
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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 outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

## 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 registered to provide care and accommodation for up to 18 children and young people. The home accommodates children and young people for 52 weeks of the year and also provides respite/short breaks during the week, at weekends, and during school holidays.

Accommodation is divided into five separate self-contained units. Two units are used as a permanent home for children between the ages of five and 19. One unit is for respite/short breaks. One unit is a permanent home for young people between the ages of 16 and 25.

The home provides a large garden at the rear of the property with a play area, a small vegetable garden and an area for sitting and eating outdoors when weather permits. There is also a large indoor swimming pool and there are plans to add changing and shower facilities to this area.

Three young people were met with during this inspection and observations of their interactions with staff contributed to the findings of this inspection.

## **Summary**

The overall quality rating is good.

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

At this full, unannounced inspection, all key national minimum standards were assessed. This is a good home with some outstanding features.

Young people are treated as individuals. They enjoy positive relationships with staff and this helps to ensure that they have their individual needs are met. Young people's views are respected and actively sought by staff. This helps to ensure that young people's day-to-day experiences are based on their preferences. The high level of training that staff receive contributes to young people having their health needs met. Excellent arrangements exist for communication with health care professionals which enables staff to provide care that is specific to the individual needs of young people and this promotes their welfare.

Young people benefit from living in a safe, well maintained and homely environment and there is a strong emphasis on helping young people to feel this is their own home. This is achieved through measures such as supporting young people to contribute to the decoration of the home and through carrying out tasks such as their own shopping and cooking. Education is valued and promoted and young people are given good opportunities for preparation for adulthood.

There is strong management in this home, good quality monitoring and excellent arrangements for the training and development of staff. This ensures that young people benefit from being cared for by a competent and well trained staff team.

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

No recommendations or actions were set at the last inspection.

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

The provision is outstanding.

There are outstanding arrangements in place for promoting young people's health and well-being. These include ensuring that young people enjoy a healthy and varied diet. The home is separated into units where a small number of young people live and there is a strong emphasis on encouraging young people to make this feel like their home. This contributes to young people being actively involved in menu planning, shopping and cooking for their own unit and to enjoying meals in homely and pleasant surroundings. Young people are supported to make decisions about what they would like to eat at regular house meetings and young people's requests are acted upon. This helps to ensure that young people are valued and enjoy meal times. Menus are provided in pictorial format to support young people's understanding of them. The provision of an on-site swimming pool and large well-maintained garden helps to ensure that young people have excellent opportunities for exercise.

The strong arrangements that are in place for gathering information about young people's health needs helps to ensure that staff are clear about how they can promote young people's health. Excellent communication networks with relevant health care professionals enable staff to provide care that is specific to the individual needs of young people. There are comprehensive health care plans that are kept under review and this contributes to staff carrying out good consistent health care. There are excellent training and development opportunities for staff which help to provide them with the skills required to meet young people's health needs. Training is tailored to the specific health needs of young people which goes some way to promoting these needs. Recent training has included training in nutrition and health, safe handling of medication, diabetes awareness and insulin injection, emergency first aid and defibrillator training.

Young people's welfare is promoted and protected by the robust policies and procedures that are in place regarding medication and first aid. A number of staff on each shift are trained in first aid and all staff are made clear about who has this qualification at hand over sessions. This good practice helps to ensure that young people have access to a first aid with limited delay. The comprehensive training that staff are provided with in relation to the safe handling of medication, and their understanding of this helps to ensure that young people are protected. Medication is stored safely and securely and clear audit trails are maintained which helps to promote safety in the home.

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

The provision is good.

Young people have their privacy protected. Staff are given clear information about the importance of privacy and dignity in their induction to the home. This ensures that young people are cared for by staff who treat them with respect and uphold their dignity. Personal care is carried out sensitively and staff know how to deal with confidential information. Complaints are taken seriously by the home and are well handled. Three complaints have been made since the last inspection. A thorough investigation has been made in relation to all of these and care has been taken by the home to ensure that the complaint has been resolved to the complainants satisfaction. Information about how to make a complaint is made clearly available to all stakeholders. These actions go some way to ensuring that stakeholders know their concerns will be taken seriously and addressed.

There are policies and procedures in place regarding child protection that help to protect young people. Staff are trained in child protection and are clear about their roles in ensuring young people's welfare. Good practice is followed by the Registered Manager regarding child protection such as maintaining links with, and seeking advice from the local authority designated officer for child protection. Bullying is not reported to be an issue in this home. The high staffing ratios allow staff to provide close supervision and monitoring which helps to promote young people's safety. It is not common for young people to go missing from the home. There are clear policies and procedures regarding this that are understood by staff and this helps to ensure that if a young person did go missing, staff would follow good practice for keeping them safe.

The positive relationships that exist between staff and young people help to ensure that young people are supported to develop positive behaviour. There are good opportunities for staff training in a range of behaviours and conditions and this helps to ensure that staff respond appropriately to the individual needs of young people. Staff are trained to use de-escalation techniques and this means that physical restraint is used rarely, and as a last resort. This training is refreshed yearly. A handbook is available to staff which provides information to about conditions such as bipolar, autism and aspergers. This also helps to ensure that staff understand, and respond positively and appropriately to young people's individual needs.

Young people live in a home that is safe and secure. There is staff training in a range of health and safety areas and staff are clear about their responsibility for carrying out safe practice in the home. Training includes fire safety, the safe handling of chemicals, infection control and risk assessment. Regular safety checks on the fire safety equipment help to keep young people safe. Regular fire drills occur and there are allocated fire wardens and this ensures that young people and staff are clear about the evacuation procedures. Other safety checks occur in the home such as checks on the stair lift, water, gas and electrical supplies and this practice helps to promote young people's well-being. Young people's welfare is promoted through the

home's robust staff recruitment policies and procedures. These ensure that thorough checks are made on all staff members prior to them working with young people. Checks include enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks and obtaining written references from past employers.

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

The provision is good.

There is a strong focus in this home on ensuring that young people are treated as individuals and this allows individual needs to be well addressed. Staff are trained in equality and diversity and this helps to provide them with skills for identifying and promoting individual needs. Care plans identify issues relating to young people's identity, cultural and religious backgrounds and this also helps to ensure that staff are clear about young people's needs. Care plans are written up with young people's involvement and drawn up in pictorial formats to help promote young people's understanding of them. Young people are encouraged to share positive and relaxed relationships with staff and are also supported to access local advocacy groups. These measures help to ensure that young people's wishes and feelings are heard, valued and acted upon. Young people are supported to take controlled risks. Clear risk assessments are in place for young people which are available to, and understood by staff.

Education is valued in the home and young people are supported to make educational achievements. Each young person has an education plan that is understood by staff and this helps to ensure that staff are clear about young people's educational needs. Most young people attend local schools and home/school communication logs are maintained to help promote consistency in young people's care. The home also liaises with schools in relation to young people's use of pictorial documents and key workers carry out monthly visits to school to observe young people's progress and this also helps to promote good consistency in care.

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

The provision is good.

Young people have their needs assessed effectively prior to moving into the home and this helps to ensure that these needs are understood by staff and are able to be met. The Registered Manager states that information is sought from as many sources as possible in order to gain a full picture of young people's needs. Comprehensive care plans are generated from needs assessments and these are closely monitored to ensure that the requirements of the plan are implemented in the day-to-day care of young people. Young people's care is reviewed regularly in line with statutory requirements.

Young people benefit from being supported to maintain constructive contact with their family members. Staff help young people to visit their families, to make telephone calls and send written correspondence. Staff say that young people get

lots of individual support when they move in and move on from the home. This process is done gradually to help young people appropriately through the change in their lives. The Registered Manager states that young people are invited to visit the home with their families on a number of occasions before moving in to help them feel settled. There is also a pictorial young people's guide which helps young people to understand what to expect from the home. Young people are able to choose furniture and the colours of their bedrooms when they move in and this helps them to build positive relationships with staff and settle into the home. Staff offer good individual support to young people who are moving on from the home such as accompanying them on visits to their new homes and this offers reassurance during this significant change for them.

There are good arrangements in place for supporting young people to have a say in the way that the home is run. Staff work effectively in helping young people who do not communicate verbally to have their say by using techniques such as observation. This helps young people to make individual choices and feel valued. Regular house meetings are held and these ensure that young people are able to make choices about things like what is on the menu and the activities facilitated.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Young people receive care that helps prepare them for adulthood. From the point of moving into the home, young people have skills for independence written into their care plans. Staff support young people to develop these skills which include carrying out household chores, personal care and being out in the community. Pathway plans are in place for young people who are at an age where this is appropriate. Staff work closely with other agencies in drawing up these plans and this helps to promote a smooth transition for young people who are moving on.

Young people benefit from living in a pleasant, well maintained and well decorated environment. The home is divided into small units and this helps to create a domestic and homely place for young people to live in. Young people are able to contribute their ideas to the way that the home is furnished and decorated and this helps them to develop a sense of belonging. The home has large and well maintained gardens and a swimming pool. Work is currently being carried out in the building of changing rooms for the pool. Young people also benefit from having an on-site cinema and sensory room.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

There are excellent arrangements for staff training and development in this home at this ensures that young people benefit from having their needs met by competent and knowledgeable staff. There is a full time dedicated training manager and training facilities available on-site and this helps to ensure that staff receive excellent



opportunities for training and development. The training manager seeks out a wide range of training to help staff develop their practice. Training is provided that specifically relates to the individual needs of young people and this helps to promote young people's well-being. All staff undergo a comprehensive induction and refresher training is provided in a number of areas, such as physical restraint and de-escalation techniques and this promotes safe care for young people.

This is a home with excellent management and organisation. Staff feel well supported. One staff member said 'The Registered Manager has an open door policy and offers good support'. All levels of staff carry out direct work with young people and this helps to ensure that there is clear understanding by all staff about young people's needs. Regular supervision is provided to staff who report that this is helpful. Time is allocated to allow three handover sessions each day and this helps to ensure good consistency in care for young people and promotes the smooth running of the home. There are robust systems in place for monitoring the quality of the service provided to young people. These include regular regulation 33 and 34 monitoring visits which the Registered Manager states are used as a way to raise standards in the home. Young people and stakeholders are surveyed about their views regarding the running of the home. Feedback is used to make improvements in line with these views.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Young people are treated as individuals and specific needs are clearly recorded in care plans and understood by staff. All staff receive training in equality and diversity. Young people's needs, development and progress is recorded to reflect their individuality.