

## Inspection report for Children's Home

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<b>Inspector</b>	Mary Timms
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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 service provides residential respite arrangements for families of children with a learning disability between the ages of eight and 18 years. Nine children can be cared for at any one time which may include one child with a physical disability. Placements are agreed and planned according to identified levels of need. The home is located on the outskirts of a large town within easy travelling distance of community resources. The facilities provide both shared and individual areas for children. There is a lounge, a quiet room, a sensory room, a dining room and individual bedrooms for children. There are adequate bathrooms, some with the necessary adaptations to support children with mobility restrictions. Outside play areas are available with play equipment provided.

### **Summary**

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This was an unannounced inspection planned to review the service provided against identified key national minimum standards.

This is a well managed service where children and families receive a high standard of care delivered by experienced and knowledgeable staff. There are excellent arrangements to promote the health of children during respite stays at this home. Effective and thorough safeguarding systems ensure that children are closely monitored and are kept safe. The service works closely with parents and involved professionals. Children receive a high degree of individualised support and are encouraged to develop new skills and to make personal choices.

The quality of care provided is monitored closely by the management team and also by external managers who visit the home. There is a commitment to service development and promoting positive outcomes for children.

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

Not applicable as this is the first inspection of this service since being reregistered after local authority boundary changes.

## **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

There are excellent arrangements in place for promoting the healthy lives of the children who use this service. Assessed healthcare needs are identified and are reflected clearly into well detailed healthcare plans, which are implemented in practice. Plans are developed in consultation with health professionals and parents. When necessary specific areas of planning are written directly by the involved health professional. Staff have a good awareness of individual health needs and consult regularly with parents about children's changing health requirements. Areas of training are provided by health professionals. As a result staff know how best to support children to be healthy.

Staff undertake food hygiene training and good food safety management systems are operated. A balanced and varied diet is provided to children. Dietary requirements and restrictions are well recorded and inform menu planning. Comments from parents confirm that where appropriate children are supported to take part in food preparation 'my child is encouraged and helped to buy and cook food'. Children's comments confirm that the 'food is good'. Children are encouraged to join activities relating to growing fruit and vegetables in the garden.

A safe and robust medication system is operated. Staff undertake medication administration training and are subjected to competency assessments each year. An effective system, developed and adjusted over time, is used to transfer children's medication from parents to the home for each respite stay. Medication is stored securely and is administered as directed by the prescribing practitioner. The medication administration system is closely monitored by the management team.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are protected by well planned and effective safeguarding arrangements. Staff undertake training which supports their ability to protect children, including; first aid, safeguarding children, behaviour management and health and safety training. Well detailed risk assessments are documented which set out clear risk management strategies for group activities and in relation to individual children. Staff have an excellent understanding of the known and potential risks for individual children and know how to safeguard them successfully.

Children are cared for in a safe environment. Health and safety monitoring checks are undertaken on a regular basis. For example, water temperature checks and fire safety equipment. Effective risk management strategies are implemented in practice, including fire evacuation drills for both staff and children. The Registered Manager has recently facilitated a training session during which staff improved their awareness while responding to a range of potential fire scenarios. Comments from parents include 'parents/carers feel that their youngsters are in a safe environment

when they are away from home'.

Children and families are able to raise a concern or complaint. The service has a complaints policy and procedures which are made known to families when they are first linked to the service. A 'sad box' is positioned in a communal area in which children can post a completed complaints form or a note about their concerns. Children are asked regularly if they have any concerns. For example, during children's meetings or during key worker sessions. Staff know the children well and understand their behaviours in the context of their disabilities. This means that they are able to respond appropriately and promptly should a child display that they have a concern.

Children are protected by the operation of robust staff recruitment procedures. Checks required by regulation are completed prior to staff commencing work in the home.

Children's right for privacy is respected. Staff are mindful of the need to promote children's right for privacy when providing personal care, while at the same time ensuring that they are safe and that their needs are appropriately met. Comments from placing social workers include 'children are treated with respect and dignity'.

Behaviour is well managed. Known challenging behaviours, triggers and behaviour management strategies are reflected clearly within planning documents. The planned response to behaviours is discussed with parents and placing social workers. Respite groups are closely monitored to ensure that individual behaviour management plans can be supported. When necessary children may be supported by the agreed staffing level in a separate area of the building. Comments from children confirm their view that the rules 'are fair'.

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

The provision is good.

Children receive a good level of support and encouragement to enjoy and achieve. Staff are knowledgeable about the broad range of needs supported by this service. Individual support needs are assessed and are set out clearly within individual planning documents. Children are cared for by experienced and caring staff who are passionate about their role and responsibilities. Comments from children confirm that 'I am helped to get ready in the morning'. Also confirming that this home is good at 'making me happy'. Children confirm that they feel 'able to talk to someone if they feel sad'. Comments from staff make reference to the good quality of care being confirmed because 'children enjoy coming here'.

The home provides a range of adaptations and equipment which enable children to fully access the services provided. Individual needs relating to culture and religion are supported. For example, parental requests for particularly dietary requirements are facilitated.

While the primary responsibility for children's education is planned and supported by parents, the service has developed links with schools and maintains good communication with teaching staff. Key workers undertake school visits and contribute to education review meetings.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The arrangements which support children to make a positive contribution are excellent. At the point of referral a visit is made to the family home by key members of staff. The child and parents are provided with written and pictorial information about the service.

An assessment of need is undertaken in consultation with parents and involved professionals. Individual needs are set out clearly and concisely in well detailed placement plans. Plans are reviewed on a regularly basis. The service contributes to both education and looked after child review processes.

Staff are knowledgeable and have a very good understanding of the individual children using the service. This means that they are able to respond quickly to children's needs and, where appropriate, are able to support them to make their views known. Comments from social workers include 'the staff are continuously driving forward the best possible outcome for my clients'. A range of communication methods are used to aid children to have a say and to understand the service provided. For example, photographs of the staff on duty each day are displayed. Also, a communication mat is used within children's meetings to support them to make their views known.

The service works closely with social workers and parents, and there is a commitment to developing the service in response to collated feedback. Open days are held during which parents and social workers are encouraged to complete feedback forms. Comments from social workers include confirmation that the service involves them and communicates with their agency to promote good outcomes for children. Also that 'communication is very good, and there is an excellent relationship between the service and the children with disabilities team'.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well maintained and appropriate environment. Communal areas are decorated to a good standard and are kept clean and hygienic. The range of accommodation allows children to spend time together or to be supported one-to-one with an activity. Bedrooms are developed to meet children's differing needs. For example, a number of the bedrooms have a painted mural on a wall while others are left with plain walls in order to not over stimulate some children.

A wide range of adaptations are provided to support the differing needs of the children using this service. Examples are: games and television arrangements, a sensory room, bathroom facilities and specialised beds. Children have access to a large garden which is well equipped with appropriate play facilities.

In line with individual needs and abilities children receive support to develop areas of independence and to learn new skills. Staff encourage children to take on as much responsibility as possible for their own personal care. They are encouraged to make choices and where appropriate to make their own drinks and snacks. Comments from placing social workers include 'staff encourage the children I work with to do most things themselves'.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Children and parents are provided with information about the service which supports them to understand the service they can expect to receive. The home has a Statement of Purpose document which is currently under review by senior managers. Written information is provided to parents and a photographic children's guide is shared with children at the referral stage.

This is a well managed service where children are cared for by appropriate numbers of competent and caring staff. The quality of care provided is monitored closely by the very experienced management team. External managers also visit the home and undertake monitoring checks.

A core training programme is provided for all staff with refresher training at appropriate intervals. Newly appointed staff undertake an induction programme across the first six months of their employment. Comments from parents include: 'The staff are dedicated, caring professionals who really get to know your child' and 'they make sure that they understand as much as possible about your child and have constant monitoring of their care' and 'the staff are second to none'. Social worker comments include 'staff always work well with our team' and 'the staff always offer appropriate and quality support for all my clients'. These comments show that parents and social workers value the quality of staff practice.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Care staff have an excellent understanding of the diverse needs of the children using this service and provide a high standard of well-planned care. The service provides children with an opportunity to develop friendships with other children who also have a disability. There are many displays of photographs which show children taking part in a broad range of activities and celebrations. They are supported to try new experiences and activities both within the home and on planned trips. Individual needs relating to culture and religion are supported. Staff facilitate themed evenings which include displaying information about other cultures and traditional celebrations. For example, recent themes have been black history and Halloween.



