

## Inspection report for Children's Home

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<b>Inspection date</b>	05/01/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Christopher Garrett
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Random

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	25/08/2010
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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 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 is a home for up to seven young people, aged between five and 15 on admission. An older admission age applies to the two young people who are accommodated in the semi-independence unit. This service is accredited as a registered therapeutic community. Most of the young people have therapeutic input from external therapists and the aim is to achieve permanency within a family setting. The young people usually remain at the home for up to two years before they move on. The home is a very well maintained and modernised detached 17th century building situated on a busy main road a few miles from a major town centre.

### **Summary**

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

The purpose of this visit was to complete an announced interim inspection. This inspection focused on evaluating the response made by the home to the recommendations raised following the last inspection on 25 August 2010. Key standards relating to the staying safe outcome were also inspected.

The overall outcome of this inspection is outstanding. This judgement is based on findings of the previous key inspection and on evidence collected at this time. No further evidence has been collected to suggest that this should be amended.

The home continues to demonstrate a commitment to fully engage with the inspection process. Staff use this effectively to review, reflect and improve on practices within the home. The home takes positive steps to ensure that the safety of the young people takes high priority and their welfare is promoted. The young people state that they feel safe in the home and have confidence in the staff addressing any issues or concerns that they have. The young people present as being happy in the home.

Recommendations relating to recording measures of control and the home's recruitment procedures have been made following this inspection.

At the time of the inspection three young people were present in the home. Each of the young people contributed to this inspection.

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

The home has fully addressed one of the two recommendations made following the last inspection. The home was asked to review its fire risk assessment to ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. An external fire

consultant has completed an assessment of the premises and action has been taken, or is planned, to address the shortfalls that have been identified. This response has improved the level of fire safety within the home.

A second recommendation regarding an aspect of the home's recruitment procedures, and the recording of the checks undertaken when accepting portability of Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks has been partially addressed. The home has sought guidance on the use of the portability of CRB checks and has implemented a system for undertaking and recording all of the checks that it has been advised to take. The company's application form does not explicitly request that applicants record the exact periods of any previous employment. Consequently it remains difficult to determine whether there are any gaps in their employment history.

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

The provision is not judged.

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

The provision is outstanding.

There are established practices and procedures within the home that contribute to the safeguarding of the young people, promote their welfare and ensure that they live in a safe, secure and caring environment. Young people present as being happy and have confidence that the staff will help sort out and address any concerns that they have. The young people advise that they feel safe within the home.

The young people know what levels of privacy they can expect and state that staff keep to these. Staff have developed practices that show high regard for the young people's privacy. For example, the young people advise that staff are aware of sensitive times such as when they are changing and knock on bedroom doors before they enter. The young people comment positively on the level of supervision that they receive and explain that they are able to have time on their own if they wish. Staff are aware of any agreed contact restrictions in place and ensure that these are fully adhered to. Young people are fully aware of the restrictions and understand that some contact arrangements need to be supervised by staff.

The young people know how to complain and how to raise and voice any concerns. They are fully aware of the young people's formal complaints procedure and occasionally make use of this. The young people express their satisfaction with how their complaints are dealt with and advise that they always receive feedback on any issues that they have raised. The young people express their confidence in being able to take issues directly to the adult and that these are listened to and acted upon. A separate procedure is in place for social workers, parents, carers, member of the local community and other agencies to raise concerns or to complain about the

service being provided by the home. Records indicate that there have been no recent formal complaints made to the home.

The home has established procedures in place that ensure the young people's welfare is promoted and that they are protected from abuse. The home ensures that all of its care staff have the knowledge, understanding and skills required to respond to child protection concerns. Child protection is a part of the staff's statutory training. Care staff demonstrate a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in responding to an allegation or suspicion of abuse.

The young people understand bullying is not accepted within the home. They explain that bullying rarely happens within the home and that any incidences that occur are immediately challenged by staff, and that these are routinely followed up by either a consequence (sanction) or a group discussion. One young person explained that, 'staff always do something to stop bullying from carrying on'.

There are established procedures in place to respond to occasions when a young person deliberately leaves the supervision of staff or is absent from the home without authority. The young people advise that they are aware of the procedures that staff have to follow. One of the young people explained, 'these are in place to make sure that you are safe'. Staff always go out to look for, or try to make contact with, young people who are missing. The young people's immediate needs are catered for on return to the home. Staff encourage the young people to discuss the reasons for them going missing. Records are made following any incidents and these indicate that young people going missing is not a regular occurrence.

The management of behaviour within the home continues to be highly effective. The young people have a good understanding of the standard of behaviour that is expected from them and make an effort to sustain this. The young people are routinely encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and to consider the impact that it has on others. Behaviour within the home is generally good. There is minimal use of consequences and those that are used are age appropriate and are proportionately applied. One of the young people advised that, 'consequences help you to learn about what behaviour is acceptable'. The young people think that rules in the home are fair and reasonable and advise that they 'help to keep them safe'. Each of the young people has a positive handling plan which clearly sets out planned responses to individual behaviours. All care staff are provided with regular training on the use of positive handling techniques, including the use of de-escalation and distraction techniques and the use of physical interventions. Staff make effective use of this training and there is little use of physical intervention. Records are kept of all measures of control. These do not always indicate whether a young person has been given the opportunity to comment on a measure of control that they have been given.

The home has established systems which help to keep young people, staff and visitors safe from fire. Systems are in place for the regular checking and maintenance of fire safety and detection equipment. Detailed records of fire safety activity including practice evacuations are kept. A fire risk assessment is in place and a fire

safety audit has been conducted by the local fire service. Action has been taken or is planned to address the deficiencies identified by the audit and assessment. Fire awareness is part of the statutory training provided to all staff.

The home has established systems in place for the recruitment and vetting of staff. These are a contributory factor to the safeguarding of young people and help to ensure that they are not cared for by staff who may cause them harm. The home's recruitment process covers almost all of the requirements of the national minimum standards. However, the company's application form is not explicit in regards to applicants providing definitive dates of previous employment. Consequently, it is difficult to determine if there are any gaps in their employment history. References are routinely sought and verified. The home has sought advice and guidance on the portability of Criminal Records Bureau checks and adheres to the recommendations that have been provided.

### **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 not judged.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is not judged.

## **What must be done to secure future improvement?**

### **Recommendations**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that records clearly indicate whether a young person has been given the opportunity to comment on any disciplinary measure or physical intervention used (NMS 22.14)
- ensure that the home has precise details of an applicant's employment history. (NMS 27)