

Inspection report for Children's Home

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<b>Inspector</b>	Bill Drumm
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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**

The children's home provides short break care for up to six young people of either sex aged from eight years to 17 years of age with physical or learning disabilities.

The home is a detached property standing in its own grounds. It is situated a short distance from a range of local amenities. Young people have access to an outdoor play area, shared lounge, study area and dining room. There home also has a sound and light room and a training area where young people can learn to develop skills in activities of daily living. Each young person has their own bedroom and access to bathrooms with a range of additional adaptations to ensure that their individual needs can be met.

The home provides short breaks for up to forty five young people throughout the year.

### **Summary**

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This was an unannounced key inspection of the home. All of the outcome areas for young people were inspected. The outcome areas for being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and organisation were all judged as being outstanding. The outcome area of economic well-being was judged as being good. Overall this is an outstanding service. Young people's needs are fully identified and services adapted to meet those needs. High levels of individual support are given to each young person who are supported to develop self help skills and to take responsibility for personal actions. All members of staff working at the home are committed to delivering a high quality service to the young people who live there. Young people are encouraged to participate in community based activities and to develop adult responsibilities. All young people living at the home attend education.

One recommendation has been made as a result of this inspection.

At the time of the inspection no young people were present at the home to contribute to the inspection process.

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

Since the last inspection the home's manager has ensured that a transition planning process has been developed to help enable young people make a successful transition into adulthood. In addition, the training plan for members of staff has been

reviewed and updated. All staff are trained and are competent to meet the needs of the young people living at the home.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Members of staff ensure young people have easy access to fresh fruit and vegetables and follow a healthy, varied diet. Nutritious meals are provided and young people are supported, within the limits of their ability, to be involved in menu planning, shopping, and meal preparation and baking. Some young people who live at the home have health care needs that warrant a specialised diet. Specialised diets are fully catered for within the home. Young people who require a specialised diet for religious reasons are also catered for. The home has developed a close working relationship with the dietician service. The dietician regularly receives copies of the home's menus to help ensure a balanced healthy diet is always provided to young people. Young people are encouraged to use the garden and the play equipment. This helps them to take regular exercise and to stay fit and healthy. Young people living at the home enjoy a healthy and well-balanced diet and healthy eating is promoted.

Some of the young people who live at the home have complex health care needs. Young people have their health care needs fully identified at the time of their admission and members of staff work actively, in partnership with parents and health care professionals to ensure that all young people remain fit and well. Members of staff monitor the health care needs of individual young people very closely and take quick, appropriate action when necessary to ensure their well-being. The good health of young people is fully supported and actively promoted.

Young people living at the home are protected by the home's medication administration systems. Policies and procedures relating to the safe handling and administration of medication are in place. All members of staff have undertaken formal training in the safe handling and administration of medication, which includes, where necessary, the administration of emergency medication. Records relating to the administration of controlled drugs were also found to be accurate. Training in the safe handling and administration of medication is kept up-to-date. Written records examined at the time of the inspection were completed accurately. Audit systems are in place to ensure regular checks are made and that any mistakes or discrepancies are quickly highlighted so corrective action can be taken. This is very good practice and the welfare of children living at the home is fully safeguarded.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Members of staff are pleasant, friendly and caring towards all the young people in their care. Personal care tasks are undertaken in privacy and the dignity of the young person is upheld. There are sufficient bathrooms and toilets to meet the needs of the

young people living at the home. Only members of staff working at the home can gain access to toilets and bathrooms from the outside in an emergency. The home has policies and procedures in place, which explain what action members of staff should take when it is necessary to search a young person's bedroom. No room searches have ever been carried out at the home. Personal information relating to each young person is stored securely to prevent unauthorised access. Young people living at the home are treated with the utmost dignity and respect.

There are policies and procedures in place for dealing with complaints in an effective and timely manner. There have been no complaints made since the last inspection. A number of compliments have been received from satisfied parents. Young people living at the home have access to complaints information in a range of different formats, including Braille. Young people are actively encouraged and supported to make their needs known. All members of staff working at the home have received training in the complaints process. This proactive approach to complaints is excellent.

A copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures is available in the home. There has been no child protection referral made since the last inspection. All members of staff working at the home have undertaken training in child protection. Training in child protection is updated at frequent intervals in order to ensure members of staff remain confident and competent to deal with any child protection concerns. Young people living at the home are fully protected from exploitation and abuse.

The home has policies and procedures in place with regard to countering bullying and there have been no recorded incidents of bullying since the last inspection. The home's young person's guide includes information for young people, written in an easy to understand format about what action they should take if they feel bullies are targeting them. Members of staff working at the home have all received training in countering bullying. Young people are fully protected from being targeted by bullying behaviour.

The home has up-to-date policies and procedures in place with regard to what action staff should take if a young person is absent without authority. There have been no occasions since the last inspection when a young person has been absent without authority. Members of staff provide consistently high levels of supervision and quality care to young people to help keep them safe.

The home has policies and procedures in place relating to the safe holding or restraint of young people, and members of staff have received appropriate training. Staff training is reviewed and updated at regular intervals. Restraint records are retained within a separate bound and numbered book used specifically for that purpose. There has been one restraint used within the home since the last inspection. Members of staff actively promote socially acceptable behaviour and encourage young people to develop adult responsibilities through encouragement, advice and support. The home also has policies and procedures in place relating to the sanctions that can be used to help young people improve their behaviour. Sanctions are rarely, if ever, used as a means of encouraging positive behaviour.

Members of staff working at the home are skilled, competent and experienced practitioners, who prefer to use less punitive measures as a means of helping a young person develop and mature.

Young people, members of staff and visitors to the home, are protected from fire and other hazards within the home. Regular fire drills take place throughout the year and at different times of the day and night. Health and safety risk assessments are also carried out at regular intervals. Written evidence that the home has current public and employee liability insurance to a minimum value was available at the time of the inspection.

The home has a very stable, experienced and committed staff team. There have been two new staff members appointed since the last inspection and there are excellent recruitment and selection processes in place. Safety checks are carried out to ensure the suitability of each applicant. Each member of staff has provided references from previous employers or those that know them. Visitors to the home are asked to clearly identify themselves on their arrival and to sign the visitors' book. Young people who live at the home are provided with physical safety and security.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The progress of each young person is frequently monitored. Key workers liaise closely with the parents of young people who stay at the home to ensure that essential information is both gained and shared. Young people living at the home receive individual help and support quickly and efficiently when they need it or when they request it. Meetings between key workers and young people take place at frequent intervals. The outcome of these meetings is discussed with other members of staff in order to ensure that essential information is shared and that young people continue to receive consistently high levels of care and support.

All the young people living at the home attend school. The home has a proactive approach in supporting young people to progress with their education and to achieve their maximum potential. This approach to helping young people is of a very high quality. Young people living at the home are actively encouraged and supported with their education and to grow and develop.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Young people living at the home are appropriately placed. Meetings are held prior to admission with parents, school teachers and health care professionals to help to ensure all essential information is available, all needs have been identified and that the placement is appropriate. Young people are offered the opportunity to visit the home as many times as they wish to prior to their admission, this helps them to feel safe and secure. Each young person has their own placement plan, which clearly

outlines what their needs are and how they will be met. In order to help ensure that needs are met, the manager and members of staff undertake individual risk assessments of each young person and devise more detailed care plans following admissions. The admissions process to the home is excellent.

The manager and members of staff regularly attend review meetings with partner agencies, and strategies are developed to help meet identified needs quickly. This pro-active approach to the care of young people living at the home is excellent.

The service provided at the home is a short-break respite care service. Contact with friends and family is maintained throughout a young person's stay at the home.

The admissions procedure for the home is very thorough and individual to each young person. Young people, and their parents, visit the home prior to a placement being agreed. Different strategies are discussed to consider the most appropriate manner in which to introduce a young person to the home. Members of staff work extremely hard to try to make young people feel welcome and to understand what it will be like to live there.

Young people are encouraged and supported, within the limits of their own ability, to make decisions about their lives and to influence how the home is run. Young people are encouraged to raise issues, which affect their lives. Parents of young people living at the home are actively encouraged to provide feedback about how the home is run, what it does well and how it can be improved. This is exceptional practice.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

The manager and members of staff work hard to encourage and support young people to take responsibility for their actions, to develop socially acceptable behaviour and to develop adult responsibilities. Each young person is encouraged and supported, within their capabilities, to learn independence skills and activities for daily living. The home has a comprehensive, transition planning process in place, which helps to enable young people to make a successful transition into adulthood. At the time of the inspection no young people were old enough to have a formal transition plan in place. Young people receive the care they need to prepare them for and support them into adulthood.

The home is fully adapted and equipped to meet the needs of young people with a disability. Young people enjoy homely accommodation that is decorated, furnished and maintained to an extremely high standard. The home's grounds have been developed to provide a safe and secure place where all young people can play and enjoy themselves. Ancillary staff employed within the home work extremely hard to keep it clean, tidy and very pleasant.



## Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Members of staff support enable and encourage young people to participate in community-based activities on an equal basis and to develop their own identity. The Statement of Purpose has recently been reviewed and updated to ensure it accurately describes what young people can expect from living at the home.

The majority of staff members receive regular, formal supervision and appraisal. The manager makes herself available to talk with members of staff should they need to do so. Staff meetings are held at frequent intervals and full written records of staff meetings are retained. Young people are looked after by members of staff who are generally very well supported.

Young people receive the care and services they need from skilled and competent staff. All residential members of staff are trained to a minimum of National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. This is excellent. There are clear arrangements in place for members of staff to deputise in the absence of the manager. Staff rotas have designated handover periods built into them and there are a sufficient number of staff members on duty at all times to meet the diverse needs of the young people living at the home.

Members of staff are sufficient in number, experience and qualification to meet the needs of the young people living at the home. The home's rotas ensure that, where possible, there is a mix of both male and female staff on duty. Staff sickness and holidays are covered by existing staff members being flexible in their work patterns. Consistency of care is provided to young people.

Young people are looked after by staff that are well trained and fully competent to meet their needs. Training is provided at frequent intervals to ensure staff have the necessary skills, confidence and ability, to meet the diverse and changing needs of the young people living at the home. A record of all training received by members of staff is maintained within the home.

The care of young people living at the home is monitored regularly. A system is in place to ensure performance is monitored and any patterns or issues requiring action are quickly highlighted. The opinion of the young people themselves and their parents is actively and regularly sought in order to continue to improve and develop the service provided at the home.

## 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 all members of staff receive formal supervision on a regular basis. (NMS 28.2)