

Inspection report for Children's Home

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<b>Inspection date</b>	10/01/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Stephen Graham
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Key

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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 located near to the centre of a rural town. It provides a short break service at weekends and for identified periods during school holidays, for up to six children from the age of six to 17 years who have a learning disability. It is a service provided by the local authority.

The home is situated in its own grounds a short distance from the centre of the town. Accommodation is arranged on two floors with access by the main staircase with no available lift. Children are provided with their own bedrooms on the first floor and there is an enclosed garden and play area.

### **Summary**

The overall quality rating is good.

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

The purpose of this visit was to conduct a full unannounced inspection which examined all key national minimum standards.

Young people living at the home benefit from good levels of care. They receive good help in meeting their health care needs. They are encouraged to eat healthily and to give their views on menu choice. The staff team receive regular training and are given good support to help them keep young people safe. Young people receive good individual support and are encouraged to be involved in the local community. They receive regular encouragement and good support to give their views about their care and how the home is run. The staff team provide a very homely environment for young people to stay in. The staff team is well qualified and experienced. The home is well organised.

Three shortfalls were identified as a result of this inspection; these relate to some aspects of recording and documentation and only impact in a limited way on the well-being and safety of young people. The written agreements made to confirm the action to be taken in response to unacceptable behaviour by young people are not always dated or incorporated clearly into their care plans. Annual maintenance of the central heating boiler at the home is overdue. Visits to the home to monitor the quality of the service on behalf of the registered provider are not occurring every month as recommended.

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

There were no actions raised or recommendations made at the previous inspection.

## **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Young people living at the home receive good help from staff to meet their health needs. They are supported and encouraged to contribute their ideas to menu planning and be involved in menu choice. The staff team are trained in food hygiene and to help demonstrate that young people are eating a suitable and varied diet, they maintain a clear record of the food actually eaten. Young people and staff also eat out together as a regular part of care arrangements each weekend.

The staff team complete detailed plans and risk assessments confirming how the health needs of each young person staying at the home will be met. They work closely with parents, specialist health advisors and social workers to achieve this. Specialist training and guidance regarding the required procedures for the safe administration of treatment and medication is also provided to staff. Written consents and agreements are obtained from parents, doctors and specialist medical staff where necessary. The manager monitors all written agreements and medication records closely to further ensure that they are accurate. The staff team is trained to provide first aid to young people if necessary.

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

The provision is good.

There are good arrangements in place to help make sure that children are cared for safely. Young people have access to a telephone to ring home should they wish to. Arrangements are in place to allow room checks to be completed and recorded thoroughly if these were ever necessary to help keep children safe. The staff team also follow the agreed guidance in place to ensure that care records are completed properly and stored safely.

There are good arrangements in place to ensure that visitors to the home are supervised by the staff team and that children are kept safe when visitors are present. Good arrangements are in place to complete checks on any new staff team members to ensure that they are suitable to work with children.

Detailed guidance is in place and detailed risk assessments are completed to help protect each young person coming to visit the home from any potential abuse. The staff team has completed agreed safeguarding training and this training is regularly refreshed. All of the young people visiting the home during this inspection spoke to us and all were seen to receive good support from staff to help keep them safe. The home has clear procedures and agreed protocols in place to help ensure that if young people were ever to go missing they would be found and kept safe, as quickly as possible. There are also agreed procedures in place at the home to help staff respond promptly and thoroughly should any complaints be received. Young people who wrote to us confirmed that they can talk to someone at the home should they ever feel sad.

The staff team is trained and has clear guidance to follow which helps them to minimise the risk of bullying to any young person visiting the home. Young people who wrote to us confirmed that they had no worries or concerns regarding bullying. The staff team work positively with young people to support and promote good relationships between them. The staff team are also trained in the appropriate use of physical restraint. Written agreements are made to confirm the measures that may be taken in response to unacceptable behaviour. However, these are not always clearly dated to demonstrate when the agreement was made. The staff team has agreed guidance to follow if sanctions are ever imposed. However, the use of sanctions is rarely necessary as young people have very positive relationships with the staff team working at the home.

Risk assessments are used by managers and staff to help ensure that the home is a safe place for young people to live in. However, the annual maintenance of the central heating boiler is overdue. There is a range of fire safety equipment in place to help further protect young people visiting the home. This equipment is checked very regularly. The staff team are trained to know what to do if any emergency should occur at the home. They also explain and practice this with young people themselves.

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

The provision is good.

Young people living at the home receive good levels of close individual support. Those who wrote to us confirmed that they feel listened to by staff. Records are maintained which help demonstrate the care provided. These records are regularly shared by the staff team with the parents and carers of the young people using the service. Staffing arrangements at the home are closely monitored and adjusted by the manager to ensure that the care needs of every young person visiting the home, as well as the group as a whole are met. Young people are supported by staff to take part in a broad range of age appropriate social and recreational activities in the community. Young people who wrote to us confirmed that the staff team help them to do things that they enjoy and that they are involved in a range of activities.

The staff team work very closely with parents, carers, schools and education staff to help support and meet the educational needs of the young people using the service. Daily travel arrangements are confirmed with parents and carers and are monitored very closely by care staff in partnership with school staff. There are good resources available at the home to help young people to enjoy and learn.

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

The provision is good.

The staff team works closely with parents, carers and social workers to ensure that the care needs of each young person coming to stay at the home are discussed in

detail, agreed and clearly recorded. This helps ensure that young people are admitted safely and are helped to settle in quickly. Parents and carers receive detailed updates of the care provided during each stay. Young people are supported by staff to give their views on the care they receive. Key workers provide detailed written reports to help inform the care review meetings arranged regularly for each young person.

Contact information is recorded clearly and there are good arrangements in place to support young people to maintain contact with their family and friends during each short-break visit to the home.

Young people also receive good support and encouragement to give their views about how the home is run. Throughout this visit the staff talked regularly and in detail with young people about the proposed care arrangements for the weekend. House meetings are also arranged regularly for young people by the staff team. The arrangements for these meetings help to ensure that all of the young people using the service have opportunities to attend these meetings and to give their views. The manager also liaises very regularly with parents and carers. Questionnaires are distributed to parents and carers to help encourage and gather their views on the service. Those examined during this visit contained very positive comments on the quality of the service provided to young people and their families.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

The staff team liaise closely with parents to create opportunities for young people to practice independence skills. Young people receive good practical support from staff to help achieve this, particularly with personal budgeting, shopping for personal items and also with menu preparation and activity planning. The staff team liaises closely with parents and social work staff to help support older young people in their transition from children's to adult services.

The home is decorated and furnished to a good standard. The staff team work to ensure that it provides a homely environment for young people to live in. Young people are supported by staff to personalise their bedroom space during each visit. Young people who wrote to us confirmed that their bedrooms have the things they need and are nice and comfortable. The furniture, fittings and equipment at the home are monitored closely by staff to ensure that they are safe for use by young people. Any repairs that may be needed are notified promptly to help ensure that the home remains both safe and homely.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The home has a Statement of Purpose which is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure it provides an accurate description of the service. There is also a young

people's guide, this contains good information about how the service is provided and who young people should speak to if they need any further advice.

The staff team working at the home are well qualified and are very experienced in working with children and young people. They regularly attend additional training opportunities to help them meet the care needs of young people using the service. Their ongoing training needs are reviewed very regularly by the manager. The daily staffing levels at the home are also planned and monitored closely. The manager can adjust and further increase staffing levels where necessary to help ensure that the needs of young people staying at the home each day are met. Young people who wrote to us confirmed that in their view the staff team at the home is very good and so is the quality of care they receive from them.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The home provides good individual support to young people and works closely with parents, health, education and social care staff to support this. There are good processes in place to consult with young people and their parents and they receive good support to be involved and participate in their local community.

The manager uses the systems put in place to monitor the home's records and to create monthly reports regarding the quality of the service provided to young people. However, the monitoring visits completed on behalf of the registered provider do not always take place each month as recommended. Young people's files are well presented and maintained. They contain the information needed by staff to care successfully for young people. Young people who wrote to us confirmed that they can look at the things written about them.

## **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 the written agreements made to confirm the action to be taken in response to unacceptable behaviour by young people are clearly dated and incorporated into their care plans (NMS 22.5)
- ensure that the central heating boiler is maintained annually (NMS 26.4)
- ensure that monitoring visits to the home take place each month. (NMS 32.1)