

Inspection report for Children's Home

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<b>Inspection date</b>	30/03/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Jackie Callaghan
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Key

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	12/09/2010
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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**

The specific purpose of the home is to provide care for three young people from 11 - 17 years who experience complex, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The home is set in a rural setting, situated close to a large city. There is a range of facilities and amenities available within easy access. Young people living at the home are ideally placed to make use of all the sporting and leisure facilities that the area has to offer. The location also offers easy access to the countryside. The home has three storeys. The ground floor comprises: three lounge areas for TV /game and study; a modern kitchen with open plan dinner; a Sun room, utility room and conservatory. The first floor has four bedrooms; one with en-suite and two further bathrooms. The top floor has two further bedrooms.

There are currently two young people living at the home. Both young people were present for part of this inspection and one young person actively contributed to this report.

## **Summary**

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

This was a full unannounced inspection that concentrated on key national minimum standards. This is the home's first inspection since registration.

The inspection found that the home provides an overall satisfactory standard of care and support that helps young people, particularly relating to their education, personal, social and emotional development. The Registered Manager has a strong commitment and focus on improvement. Two actions and two recommendations have been made as a result of this visit. The areas for development include staff training, staff support processes and improving the detail and quality of recording. A young person summed up the care they receive as they commented 'I really enjoy living here'.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable. This is the home's first inspection since registration.

## **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Young people enjoy healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary and health needs. They go shopping with staff to buy their food and occasionally help to prepare their own meals and snacks. The promotion of independence in this area is a strong feature of how the home works with young people to develop skills and self-confidence. One young person commented 'the food is nice and I get to make myself snacks and drinks when I want'.

The good health of young people is promoted because staff have a good knowledge of their individual and specific health needs. A clear plan for each young person details how their specific and general health issues are to be addressed. Young people are well supported by external health care professionals and these professionals work closely with the home's staff.

There are robust systems for the safe storage and delivery of medication, which protect young people. Staff are appropriately trained, procedures are clear and medication is safely stored in a locked cabinet. The recording system is effective. Records are regularly monitored by senior staff to ensure that they are accurate. The Registered Manager makes sure that all staff are trained in the delivery of first aid, so that they have a clear understanding of how to care for young people in an emergency.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff respect the privacy of young people and they make sure that their information is kept confidential. Young people say that staff always knock on their doors and do not go into their bedrooms without permission. There is a very clear complaints procedure which is made known to young people when they come to live in the home. Young people understand how to make a formal complaint and there is clear evidence that they feel confident about letting staff know if they are unhappy with any aspect of their care.

Staff spoke about how they encourage young people to let them know where they will be when they leave the home. This includes keeping in touch with them by phone if they are away. If a young person goes missing, staff work closely with the police and other agencies to ensure their safe return. However, this practice is potentially weakened because the written report does not always demonstrate that this is the action staff take. Likewise, when the young person returns home some of the documentation has limited comments in like 'they looked fine'. This give the impression that no follow up work is undertaken with the young person around what it is that made them leave the home without permission, or the risks that they place themselves at.

Staff have a good understanding of the needs of young people and how to safeguard them. Staff receive child protection training as well as behaviour management and physical intervention training which supports their day-to-day practice. A young person said, 'I have been restrained but I have never been hurt by staff. In fact they have made me feel very safe. Staff were right to take a hold of me as I was out of control and would have hurt myself'.

There is a strong emphasis in the home on recognising and rewarding positive behaviour and effort. Staff develop positive relationships with young people. Young people know that bullying is not tolerated and they are confident that staff will intervene to ensure they are protected from bullying by others should the need arise.

The management of health and safety processes are effective. There are regular fire safety tests and young people take part in evacuation drills. As a result, they understand what to do in the event of a fire or other emergency. Risk assessments on the environment and on activities that young people are involved in are well written and regularly reviewed to make sure that information is up to date.

There are effective procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff. These ensure that all staff are thoroughly vetted before they start work. The identity of all visitors to the home is checked before they are allowed in. These robust systems protect young people, as they ensure that unauthorised individuals are not able to gain access to the home.

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

The provision is good.

Young people are provided with the necessary individual support that helps them to engage appropriately with their peers and others. Young people say they feel safe and secure in the home and they are supported to make good progress. Young people's individual identities are respected and staff endeavour to engage the additional support they need for mental, emotional or physical health needs. Staff have access to a range of information that helps them have an understanding and awareness of individual needs. Records show that where these needs have been identified staff work in a way that ensures their choices and preferences are supported and met.

Young people's educational achievement is promoted and valued and is seen as part of their preparation for adulthood. All are encouraged to fully participate in education at school. Some good work is being undertaken to ensure that all young people engage with their learning. For example, a phased return to education is used when the education placement breaks down.

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

The provision is good.

Detailed placement plans are developed by staff, with the full involvement of young people to ensure that their individual needs are identified. Plans detail outcomes and targets to be achieved. The implementation of these plans is the responsibility of individual key workers with contributions from the team as a whole. Placement plans include risk assessments which ensure that young people maintain their levels of independence in a safe manner. The plans also address the support necessary for education, relationships and the management of behaviours. The home promotes family contact in line with care plans.

The care and progress of young people is formally reviewed through the statutory reviewing process. This ensures that plans are kept up to date and relevant to the ongoing and changing needs of young people and that the needs of young people are being met by the home.

Young people are introduced to the home in a way that meets their individual needs. Information about the home is available for young people in accessible formats, such as 'easy read'. Young people are encouraged to bring familiar possessions with them and staff help them customise their bedrooms.

Consultation and communication with young people is an area of real strength in the home. Young people feel that they are fully involved in all the decisions that are made about their lives and can contribute their views to the running of the home. Comments include 'staff listen to me and I am encouraged to be involved in decisions about my life' and 'I like living here it is good and staff care about me'.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is satisfactory.

The daily life of the home ensures that young people are able to develop the knowledge and skills which will help them prepare for adulthood. For example, young people are encouraged to keep their own rooms clean and tidy, plan menus, shop for and cook meals.

The home provides a pleasant, clean adequate environment in a detached house. Ongoing refurbishment, redecoration and general maintenance ensure that young people are provided with a comfortable place to live. The home provides lots of space for communal and individual activity and for young people to relax in. Young people's bedrooms are adequately furnished and decorated well to reflect each young person's interests and preferences.

## Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The home provides young people, their families and placing social workers with good written information about how the home works, in the form of a detailed Statement of Purpose and young person's guide. Both documents are regularly reviewed and updated.

Young people are cared for by a staff team who are increasing in experience and skills. Staff benefit from regular staff meetings. However, the staff support processes are weakened because they are not receiving formal supervision as defined by the national minimum standards. The staff team originally in place when the home opened was made up of predominantly inexperienced residential care staff. This has placed some considerable pressure on the home as the young people placed have had extremely complex needs. The company has now increased the experience within the team by adding two more seniors. The staff team as a whole is beginning to develop their practice. However, there is still a risk that some shifts will be made up of relatively inexperienced staff. It is acknowledged that these staff members will increase in knowledge and skills over time. However, this will only come with wide-ranging training that ensures staff are enabled to understand the individual needs of the complex young people they are working with. Staff to date have only received mandatory training.

The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. The home has a strong commitment towards appreciation and celebration of differences. Care records are well kept and reflect the individuality of young people that includes their needs, development and achievements. However, training that will enable a better understanding of young people's individual needs has been limited.

Good systems are in place to monitor the service and daily lives of young people currently living in the home. The Registered Manager has established a pattern of monitoring and reporting procedures, the results of which are effectively implemented by the home's staff.

## What must be done to secure future improvement?

### Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Std.	Action	Due date
29	ensure there are at all times a sufficient number of suitably-	30/04/2011



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	experienced persons working at the home (Regulation 25.1)	
29	ensure all staff receive appropriate training. (Regulation 27.4 (a))	30/06/2011

## Recommendations

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

- ensure that all written records of a child absconding fully detail the action taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return and any action taken in light of those reasons (NMS 19.6)
- ensure new staff receive one-to-one supervision at least fortnightly for the first six months of their employment. (NMS 28.2)