

## Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspector</b>	Lynne Busby
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<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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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 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the *Inspections of children's homes – framework for inspection* (March 2011) and the evaluation schedule for children's homes.

### The inspection judgements and what they mean

**Outstanding:** a service that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

**Good:** a service that exceeds minimum requirements

**Satisfactory:** a service that only meets minimum requirements

**Inadequate:** a service that does not meet minimum requirements

## Service information

### Brief description of the service

The home is run by a local authority as part of its service to children with disabilities and their families. It is a single storey building, which provides a respite care service for up to seven children, with physical or learning disabilities.

### Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is judged to be **good**.

The home continues to make progress under its new manager. Young people benefit from a good level of care from a stable and committed staff team. Staff have a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures to ensure young people are protected from harm. There is a positive atmosphere in the home and young people were happy and settled and relationships with staff are good. Parents confirmed that young people enjoy attending the service. Young people are listened to and their views are sought by using their preferred method of communication.

Young people's needs are documented in individual care plans. However, some are more comprehensive than other ones that have recently been updated. Staff are working hard to ensure all plans are in the new format.

The shortfalls identified at this inspection relate mainly to recording systems. The restraint record does not detail the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of physical intervention. Some risk assessments are not in place to identify hazards such as the use of high plug sockets near beds. Young people's individual placement plans do not all include their needs in relation to culture, religious beliefs and ethnicity. The manager completes internal monitoring of records but the report does not include consultation with parents and placing authorities on the operation of the home. There is a staff training programme in place but this does not clearly identify if training is up-to-date. Staff have not completed complaints training which remains outstanding from the last inspection.

### Areas for improvementStatutory 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 person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
17B (2001)	ensure the restraints log details the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of these measures (Regulation 17B	30/11/2011

	(3)(f)	
34 (2001)	ensure that the monitoring system provides for consultation with parents and placing authorities. (Regulation 34(3))	30/11/2011

## Recommendations

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

- ensure all staff receive training to enhance individual skills in the complaints procedures (NMS 18.1)
- ensure risk assessments are carried out to identify potential causes of harm such as the use of high level electric sockets near beds (10.8)
- ensure that the learning and development programme for training is kept up to date (NMS 18.2)
- ensure children's individual needs are set out in the child's placement plan such as cultural and religious needs. (NMS 2.3)

## Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for children and young people are **good**.

Young people have their health needs met. Staff work closely with parents and health professionals and young people's plans detail their individual needs which are followed in practice by staff. Specialist health workers are involved where appropriate and staff are trained in specific health care such as managing epilepsy.

Young people benefit from well prepared balanced meals. They can choose what they would like to eat and are encouraged to have healthy options. Staff are aware of individual likes and dislikes and those young people who require special diets. Young people have really enjoyed new activities such as dance exercise sessions which promote healthy lifestyles.

Young people are given a range of activities in which they can participate including meals out, going on trips in the wider community and arts and music sessions. The ethos of the home is that young people are able to participate in fun and interesting activities. Health professionals say young people think of it as a youth club with lots of activities. Young people's special events are celebrated such as birthdays. Staff ensure that young people are fully involved in choosing what they would like such as a birthday cake; this helps to promote their personal choices and identity.

Young people are helped to develop life skills through going shopping and paying for items, helping to clear up after mealtimes and keeping rooms tidy. Independence is

an integral part of the home and all young people, where appropriate, are encouraged to participate in everyday tasks which include self-care, such as brushing their teeth. Social workers say that for some young people their social skills have improved by attending the home and through being with other young people.

Parents are kept informed about their child while they are attending the home. Staff make them welcome when they visit.

Young people all attend local schools which staff have links with. Staff will go into school and observe communication styles and behaviour. This is a strength and means a consistent approach is taken to caring for young people. Communication between the home, school and parents is maintained through a diary which keeps everyone informed of significant issues necessary to give the young person the best possible care.

### **Quality of care**

The quality of the care is **good**.

Young people benefit from good relationships with staff. Young people say they like the staff and enjoy coming to the home. Staff have developed positive relationships with the young people and provide a nurturing environment.

Young people's views are sought in a variety of ways and acted upon which is a strength of the home. The children's rights officer has regular meetings and young people are invited to attend and contribute to newsletters and help to develop leaflets which are child-friendly. They will advocate for young people if they have any concerns. Many of the young people in the home have limited communication skills and need assistance to complain. The staff team say they know when the young people in their care are unhappy by observations of their body language and behaviour. A variety of communication styles are used to ensure young people can give their views. The staff strive to find and use creative ways to communicate with the young people.

Young people's needs are assessed and care plans are produced which show how these will be met on a day-to-day basis. The staff have changed the format of the care plan which is more in-depth. However, not all plans reflect a young person's religious and cultural needs; therefore the plans do not consistently reflect each individual's identity. Staff demonstrated a good knowledge of each individual's needs and attend all reviews.

Staff work closely with health professionals to ensure the emotional, physical and psychological health needs of young people are met. There is a robust system for the administration, storage and disposal of medication.

The home is single storey and has been adapted to meet the needs of young people who are wheelchair users. All young people have the same room each time they visit. Staff personalise the rooms prior to the arrival of the young person with their own

bedding and nameplate on the door; this ensures they feel welcome when they arrive. The young people have access to a play area and sensory garden. The home is located close to shops and they have their own transport so young people can access activities in the local community.

## **Safeguarding children and young people**

The service is **good** at keeping children and young people safe and feeling safe.

Young people are protected by good measures in place to promote their safety and welfare. Staff members receive up to date training in safeguarding and know how to deal with concerns they may have. Staff are clear about the whistleblowing procedures and would feel supported by the management should they have cause to use them.

There have been no incidents of young people going missing from the home, but members of staff are aware of the procedures they need to follow should this occur.

Bullying is not identified as an issue in the home. However, sometimes the behaviours of some young people may impact on other children in the home which causes them distress. Staff take these matters seriously and ensure young people are kept safe. Staff talk to young people in residents' meetings about bullying and how and what to do if they are being bullied.

Young people are protected from access to unsuitable people as the recruitment of new staff is effectively managed. All necessary vetting is undertaken to ensure that the young people are cared for by staff deemed as safe. The manager also checks the files of any agency staff he employs to ensure robust recruitment techniques have been applied; this is good practice.

Young people are encouraged to develop socially acceptable behaviour. Positive behaviour is promoted by using rewards and few sanctions are used. Staff are trained in care and control and restraints are rarely used and are only used if a young person was to cause harm to themselves or others. Staff use a range of techniques to manage behaviour which de-escalates situations. However, the recording of restraints does not include the consequences and effectiveness of the restraint. Therefore, this does not provide information which staff can reflect on.

The home is maintained and good systems are in place to ensure the physical safety of young people and staff. There are a range of risk assessments in place. However, the use of high sockets resulting in trailing flexes near a bed was not clearly assessed so as to identify hazards and how they could be eliminated. The premises are well secured externally and visitors to the home are required to sign in and out and are not left unsupervised; this ensures young people are protected from unsuitable people.

## **Leadership and management**

The leadership and management of the children's home are **good**.

The home has a new manager who is working closely with the staff to develop the service and improve outcomes for the young people. The recommendations and action made at the last inspection have mostly been met. All staff have completed safeguarding training relevant to young people with disabilities. The home has had some redecoration and staff have worked hard to make it as homely as possible. The training on complaints has not yet been completed but is being organised. The manager has applied to be registered with Ofsted.

There is a clear Statement of Purpose which has been recently updated. The children's guide is pictorial and is being reviewed to provide information in formats compatible to the different communication styles used by young people.

The manager regularly monitors all records in the home to identify any concerns. However, the monitoring does not include consultation with parents and placing authorities. This does not ensure that their views on the day-to-day operation of the home are taken into account. In addition an external person visits the home to monitor the performance of the home. Any actions are acted upon by the manager. The manager is clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the home and had produced a development plan.

The home is adequately staffed to meet the needs of young people who are provided with continuity of care. Staff are child-centred in their approach and inclusive in their practice. Staff are supported through regular supervision, appraisals of their performance and training. However, the training programme is not up-to-date and therefore does not give a clear overview of what training staff have undertaken and what their training needs are.

Records are stored securely. Staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and maintain accurate records of their work with the young people.

Equality and diversity practice is **satisfactory**.