

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Susan Southey
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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

This children's home is a private provision which provides care and accommodation for up to three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties and learning difficulties aged between 11 and 17 years.

Overall effectiveness

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

Young people have personalised care plans and risk assessments taking into account their individualised needs. These plans are monitored effectively and young people are involved in the care planning and reviewing process. Staff ensure young people feel valued and ensure that their individual needs are met and their views heard.

Young people feel safe in the home environment. They say that they are not bullied and none of the young people have been restrained whilst resident in the home. Staff provide support for young people when they are upset and they have behavioural management plans which are reviewed regularly to ensure that young people's progress is monitored. Patient staff have ensured that these effective measures have greatly improved young people's behaviour.

Committed staff support young people in work placements and education. Staff work well with other agencies to promote the best outcomes for young people. Provision of support for young people in transition to independence is good. Staff ensure that they support the young people to learn the skills they need to move on to independence and adulthood. Young people expressed that staff are supportive and have motivated them to achieve in education and work placements.

Young people have opportunities to engage in activities both within the home environment and the community; this enables young people to share new experiences and promote their social skills. Staff are pro-active in facilitating activities for young people that they request. This supports young people to enjoy their interests, and develop confidence in their skills.

Young people have their health needs met well. A dedicated staff team ensure that young people live in a healthy environment where their physical emotional and psychological health is promoted.

Management of the home is good. Breaches of regulation have minimal impact on young people. Leaders and managers are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and make plans to resolve outstanding issues which may impact on the care of young people. Care plans are not signed and self monitoring reports are not

sent to Ofsted every six months. Monitoring of the security of the home is not sufficiently robust.

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

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
23 (2001)	ensure the registered person keeps all parts of the home to which children have access so far as reasonably practicable free from hazards to their health and safety (Regulation 23 (a))	27/01/2012
11 (2001)	ensure that the registered person ensures that the children's home is conducted to promote and make proper provision for the welfare of children accommodated there. With particular regard to security of the children's home (Regulation 11 (a))	13/01/2012
34 (2001)	ensure the registered person sends copies of reports in respect of any review conducted by him for the purposes of paragraph (1) are supplied to the HMCI (Regulation 34 (2))	27/01/2012
12A (2001)	ensure that child's placement plans created by the placing authority are signed. (Regulation 12 (a))	27/01/2012

Recommendations

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

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make good progress at the home. They are encouraged to engage in activities to promote independence and make a positive contribution. Young people assist staff to prepare meals. They are aware of healthy diets and enjoy preparing and eating meals that are nutritious. Young people have also been involved in decorating the home.

Young people enjoy new experiences outside the home, which benefits them socially and builds their confidence. They have the opportunity to go pheasant shooting where they learn new skills. Attending these events has encouraged young people to develop and practice social skills to build and maintain positive relationships in the future. Other activities young people have experienced are visits to museums,

bowling, gym memberships and boxing clubs. Participation in these activities supports young people to have a positive self-view and builds on their social skills.

All young people have made progress in education and work placements whilst living at the home. Young people in work, attend regularly. Most young people who are in further education attend regularly and will achieve qualifications. Young people are in educational placements that meet their individual needs. Those who are not in full time education or employment are encouraged and supported by staff to undertake educational activities during the day. Staff have developed timetables for young people with additional needs in formats that meet their individual needs. The educational achievement of young people is good.

Young people receive a great deal of commitment and support from staff and are well prepared to move on to independence and adulthood. Transition plans for young people are comprehensive and show the milestones that young people have met. Young people have learnt domestic skills including sewing buttons. In addition, they have worked with staff to develop writing, computer and telephone skills. Staff support young people to complete curriculum vitas to prepare them for future employment and give them opportunity to develop life skills. Young people have also attended training with staff for first aid and food hygiene, which is certificated.

Quality of care

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

The home environment for the young people is good. The décor is appropriate and provides a warm homely environment having pictures and ornaments displayed. Young people respect their home and as such, any damage is minimal. However some areas of the home had broken mirrors. Staff removed this immediately when noticed at inspection. However, staff had not noticed previously. Young people have access to all areas of the home including the office if staff are present. Young people have keys to their rooms, which enables them to have privacy and keep their belongings safe.

Young people have positive relationships with staff and each other. They had a good rapport, discussing their day and talking about future events. Records show that young people are encouraged by committed staff to discuss their wishes and feelings. They have residents meetings, formal one to one discussions and informal discussions when travelling with staff or at dinner. Staff ensure that young people's wishes and feelings are acted upon. During discussions with staff young people wished to go paintballing; young people researched various event organisers on line and chose the location they thought most appropriate. The event took place with both young people and staff taking part. This purposeful activity supported young people to develop their social skills and build their self-esteem.

Staff engage well with young people when they are admitted to the home. They are given information about the home, the expectations required of them and the house rules when they arrive. This information includes how they can make a complaint.

Staff complete individual profile plans through discussion with young people, which identifies their preferences, and future development plans within twenty-four hours of arriving. This good practice is effective and ensures staff have a good understanding of the young person so that their individual needs are taken into consideration.

Young people generally feel safe they say that they are safe in the environment and that staff are concerned for their welfare. However, there have been occasions when the building is not appropriately secure. Monitoring is not sufficient to ensure that young people are kept safe.

Staff are proactive in ensuring that young people gain support with all aspects of their health care. For example young people re engaged in smoking cessation programmes and the smoking cessation co-ordinator visits weekly. They also receive advice on sexual health and have access to community mental health workers and are registered with the general practitioner.

Young people have opportunity to engage in healthy lifestyles. Staff encourage healthy diets and support young people to participate in both the menu planning and preparation of meals. Staff have organised gym memberships, football activities, and boxing lessons to promote physical activity. Staff ensure that young people have comprehensive access to services and support.

Staff are good at promoting contact for young people. They organise transport, travel warrants for family members and finance for young people to travel on public transport. Young people have home visits to their families and when needed staff give them support to discuss issues that may arise from contact visits. Positive contact gives young people a sense of their culture, background and sense of belonging.

Staff promote educational achievement for young people. Responses from professionals who visit the home were positive a social worker said, 'They were very proactive in researching for colleges. Staff also did travel training with the young person which was very supportive and he now travels independently'. Young people also have home tuition, the tutor said 'the staff are very good with the young person his behaviour is good with staff. There have been no problems so far and he is up to date with his targets and ahead in some subjects'. Young people are also in employment and a dedicated staff team support young people by providing lunches and ensuring that they get up on time. Young people said 'Staff motivated me the worked hard to make me get out of bed and sort myself out'. Staff focus on helping young people to achieve in education and work placements as part of preparation for adult life.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people said that they feel safe in home. They know who to go to if they feel

unsafe. The home has a robust policy for bullying and individualised risk assessments. Young people are aware of the policy on bullying that is displayed in the home. Incidents of bullying between young people are rare one young person commented that there are positive relationships between young people stating 'the other boys are like brothers to me'.

Young people are given permission to stay out some nights in the week as they are preparing for independence. Young people have mobile phones and advise staff if they are not returning home. Staff keep records of where the young person is staying and with whom. There are clear risk assessments in place to protect young people whilst enabling them, as appropriate, to take reasonable risks as part of their growth and development. Staff take appropriate action to ensure young people are safe at night for example, offering lifts when there were concern about poorly lit areas with no path. Staff recognise the vulnerability of the diverse needs of the young people and take appropriate action to ensure their safety.

Positive behaviour is promoted for young people. Restraints have not been used for any of the young people currently resident at the home. Staff use alternative behaviour strategies to manage behaviour. Staff talk through issues with young people to de-escalate situations where young people are distressed. If the young person needs time to calm down they will go to their room. Staff are consistent in their approach this has resulted in young people interacting positively with others and behaving appropriately.

Leadership and management

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

The Registered Manager has ensured the home has made good progress. The home has met all the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection. Good practice in these areas has resulted in better outcomes for young people. The home now has a robust anti-bullying procedure. Young people have individual risk assessments relating to bullying. In addition, promoting positive behaviour and relationship plans are in place and monitored regularly.

There is effective monitoring of the quality of care, Quarterly monitoring measures the progress that young people have made in all areas of their development. Young people are afforded the opportunity to comment on their progress. This good practice demonstrates that young people are included in consultation about their care and welfare. However, a report has not been submitted to Ofsted when the Registered Manager has monitored the home.

Comprehensive care plans are in young people's files but some plans have no signatures from the young people or other parties involved in the care planning. In addition looked after children's placement plans have not been signed by the home or the placing authority. This is a breach of regulations but has minimal impact on the outcomes for young people.

Staffing levels ensure that effective supervision and support is available for young people. Staff are well supported by the manager. They have regular supervision and access to training courses. New staff receive a comprehensive induction programme and ongoing training opportunities.

Equality and diversity practice is **satisfactory**.