

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Janet Hunnam
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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 home provides care and accommodation for up to six young people who have a learning disability. It is operated by a private organisation and provides short breaks in addition to longer periods of care.

Overall effectiveness

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

Young people thrive within a nurturing, supportive, well structured home which provides a safe environment and high quality care. The staff team focus on identifying and meeting the individual needs of young people. The staff's knowledge of each young person and the excellent communication among the staff team, resulting in good levels of consistent care, enable young people to make progress. A parent reports that their child 'has been happy at the home since day one'.

Staff are continually aware of the vulnerabilities of young people and comprehensive risk assessments minimise the possibility of harm. Staff closely monitor young people to ensure they are safe. Detailed behaviour management guidelines are in place and are consistently applied. Physical intervention records are on occasions not accurate. A night time fire drill has not been undertaken to ensure that fire safety procedures protect young people at all times.

An effective manager provides valued support for staff but formal supervision is not occurring on a regular basis.

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
17B (2001)	ensure that a written record of any restraint is made in a volume kept for the purpose and includes all the details as set out in 17B(3) and 17B(4) of The Children's Homes Regulations 2001 (Regulation 17B(3) and Regulation 17B(4))	20/04/2012
32 (2001)	ensure that persons working at the home and children accommodated there are aware of the procedure to be followed in the case of fire at night. (Regulation 32(1)(e))	20/03/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure that staff are provided with regular supervision by appropriately qualified and experienced staff (NMS 19.4)
- ensure a record is kept by the home detailing the time and date and length of each supervision held for each member of staff and that this is signed by the supervisor and the member of staff at the end of the supervision. (NMS 19.5)

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Within this safe and nurturing environment, young people benefit from intense, individualised, consistent support which helps them develop self-confidence. Young people have opportunities to make choices, and develop their skills and understanding.

Through close monitoring and thorough attention to individual needs, staff ensure that young people are healthy. In small steps young people are developing an understanding of healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle.

Young people have good attendance at school and are making progress in relation to their starting points. Education is a priority and staff are proactive in accessing appropriate education facilities to positively address any challenges and barriers to educational progress and achievement.

Young people engage in activities in the wider community such as swimming, visiting the park and going out for meals. Within the home, young people participate in a variety of play activities enabling them to develop skills and interests.

Young people benefit from regular contact with their family. Families are welcomed and are actively encouraged to visit and be involved in young people's care. Young people maintain positive relationships with the support of the staff. There is excellent communication between the home and family.

Quality of care

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

Relationships between staff and young people are relaxed, friendly and good humoured. A parent reports that staff show 'patience, affection and humour' with young people who have complex, often challenging, needs. Interaction is positive

and appropriate with staff providing guidance and support while respecting young people's individual choices and wishes. Intense support helps young people develop appropriate behaviour. Young people enjoy interacting with staff who are responsive to each young person. This gives young people confidence to trust staff and respond positively to the support given to them.

The home is extremely child-centred. Staff know each young person as an individual and recognise and respond to their changing moods and ways of communicating. Though communicating their views, wishes and feelings is difficult, staff actively try to find out what it is that is causing a young person to be unhappy. Key workers play an important role in seeking out young people's views, wishes and feelings. They ensure that all the staff team have important information so that staff consistently implement effective behaviour management strategies. Young people's verbal communication is improving as a result of this intense support. Close observation leading to an understanding of young people's needs results in staff being able to divert young people from possible difficult situations. Young people benefit from this sensitive, perceptive approach by displaying less challenging behaviour.

The Children's Guide clearly sets out the process for making a complaint but due to the nature of the young people's disabilities the onus is on staff to ensure young people have the opportunity to make their views known. Young people choose meals for the menu and this is in picture format on the wall. Young people also choose what activity they would like to do within the home. Their personal likes and dislikes are evident in the personalisation of their bedrooms encouraging a sense of identity and belonging.

Young people have highly personalised care plans tailored to their individual needs. These identify specific targets such as brushing their teeth and taking their plate to the kitchen. Staff record progress on these tasks and objectives are changed as young people achieve their goals. A key strength of the home is how it identifies young people's individual needs and devises strategies to enable the young person to make progress.

Young people have access to the services and support they need to meet all their health needs. Staff respond directly to health issues and involve health professionals whenever necessary. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in attending health appointments. The home provides a healthy environment. A robust system for administering medication is in place ensuring that it is safe and effective.

Young people's needs relating to their cultural background and personal identity are identified and positively addressed in both daily living and care planning. Staff are keen to accommodate specific dietary needs and involve parents in discussions around cultural issues relating to food. Staff have a good level of awareness of cultural issues and are keen to respect and respond to diversity.

Young people live in a large detached house close to local amenities. It is well decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard. The design of the home meets the needs of young people. A sensory room helps young people relax in a

calming environment. The garden has a sand play area and there are areas for art and craft activities, computer games and a relaxing television lounge.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

The home is extremely proactive in protecting young people. Staff are vigilant and aware of the vulnerabilities of young people. Measures are in place to monitor young people closely to ensure they feel safe and are safe. The well-being and safety of young people is central to practice at the home. Detailed and comprehensive risk assessments are in place to minimise the possibility of harm. Young people do not go missing from care and there are no incidents of bullying.

Young people have individual support from a member of staff at all times and additional support if necessary. Each young person has individual behaviour management guidelines which all staff are aware of. The consistent application of these guidelines within the structure and routine of the home enable young people to thrive and make significant progress. Staff use physical intervention only as a last resort to protect young people or staff from significant harm. Incidents involving physical intervention are well recorded and monitored but the restraint log does not meet the requirements of the regulations. There are also occasions when physical intervention is recorded in an incident report but is not recorded in the restraint log. Staff receive comprehensive training in the use of physical restraint. The Registered Manager monitors the incidents of restraint closely to make certain that staff conduct any physical intervention safely.

Staff have training in safeguarding procedures resulting in a good understanding of the action they would take should there be an allegation or suspicion of harm. This contributes to effective protection for young people at the home.

The home has a robust recruitment process in place which ensures that the required checks on new staff are undertaken. Personnel files contain all required information for these employment checks. Consequently, young people are safe through the employment of suitable people.

The home is well maintained and does not pose any identifiable health and safety risks. All checks, including fire records are up-to-date. A recording procedure is in place for accidents in the home. Appropriate fire safety measures are in place including regular evacuation drills but the home has not implemented a night time fire drill to test their procedure when young people are in their bedrooms. Comprehensive environmental risk assessments are in place to safeguard young people.

Leadership and management

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

Young people benefit from a Registered Manager and staff team who are committed to supporting young people to develop and to keep them safe. The home is effectively and efficiently managed. The Registered Manager and her deputy provide strong leadership and the organisation provides constructive support. The manager is keen to develop the service and to continually improve the quality of care to impact positively on young people's lives.

A comprehensive Statement of Purpose outlines the aims and objectives of the service. The home is operating in line with this statement. The young person's guide clearly sets out what the home provides.

The Registered Manager monitors records and detailed, comprehensive Regulation 33 reports support the development of the service by making specific recommendations to improve. Consultation with young people to obtain their views takes place through individual key work sessions.

A motivated and enthusiastic staff team care for young people. Their depth of experience is relevant to the specific needs of young people at the home and training is a high priority. Regular team meetings and comprehensive handover sessions provide opportunities for staff to reflect on behaviour management strategies, share good practice and ensure that relevant information is available. Good communication at all levels resulting in significant levels of consistency among staff is a strength of the service. This has a positive impact on the quality of care provided for young people. Staff report they receive beneficial support from the manager. However, formal supervision sessions are not occurring on a regular basis and are not recorded in the correct format.

Records are clear, well organised and stored securely. They contribute to a good understanding of young people's lives, their individual needs and progress made.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.