

## Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspector</b>	Rebecca Sharp
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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

The home is run by a private organisation and is registered for eight young people. It provides assessment and care for children or young people with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. Education is provided 365 days a year, both on site and through camps and outdoor activities.

### The inspection judgements and what they mean

**Outstanding:** a service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

**Good:** a service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements

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

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

## Overall effectiveness

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

Young people receive highly effective, well-planned and personalised care. Every effort is made in the planning process to allow for all aspects of individual need to be addressed. This ensures exceptional outcomes are achieved for young people through outstanding quality of care. As a result, young people have made significant progress from their starting points. The manager uses a range of rigorous monitoring tools in order to review the quality of care for the young people and the progress of individuals in order to sustain continuous development.

Young people have extremely positive views about the quality of care they receive. One young person stated 'I get on really well with the staff here'. Staff interact well with young people in order to build positive and successful working relationships with individuals. Levels of supervision are high to fully support the safety of young people, however care is taken to ensure this is not imposing.

The manager has a clear vision for the home and developments to be made to further improve services for young people. Requirements and recommendations from the last inspection have been met which have had a positive impact on young people. The management team as a whole are creative and enthusiastic about achieving positive outcomes for young people.

### Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people have made exceptional progress while living at the home. Each young person is actively engaged in learning and benefits from individual support plans. Some young people attend further education courses and work placements to ensure a successful transition into independence. Significant improvements have been made in all aspects of young people's lives, in particular, the reduction in risk taking and offending behaviour. This has dramatically reduced for certain individuals.

Management and staff are precise and effective in identifying and addressing young people's needs. There are clear internal plans set out for each individual which include intensive work in areas of risk. Young people's health needs are met well. Individuals benefit from input from an internal psychologist who visits regularly. The home has close links with many health agencies in the area to address the physical, emotional and psychological health of young people.

Young people take part in organised group and individual activities as part of outdoor education. This encourages physical health and a positive contribution in the wider community. Young people develop self-confidence and learn new skills and interest through these experiences. One young person stated 'I really enjoy the outdoor activities, especially kayaking, which I had never done before.' As a result of these opportunities, the young person has achieved a qualification in Kayaking which allows them to instruct.

Contact plans are adhered to and young people are confident that the home supports this well. Contact visits are supervised by experienced staff and travel is arranged to ensure essential relationships are maintained.

## **Quality of care**

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

Young people have consistently positive views on the relationships they have with staff at the home and the quality of care they receive. One young person stated 'Staff know me so well they can almost read my mind. If they see me angry they take me out and calm me down.' Peer dynamics are managed well. There are clear strategies in place which support individual risk assessments in order to minimise negative behaviour and disruption to the group.

Young people feel that their views and wishes are listened to. They take part in weekly meetings, have internal placement reviews, and are consulted with regularly following incidents. They are confident in the complaints procedure if they needed to complain about anything; however, most young people state that they have never needed to complain. The process is explained upon admission, is documented in the children's guide and is covered in individual work sessions with keyworkers.

Each young person has a meticulous internal care plan. Every area of need is addressed in detail to ensure staff's awareness including personal identity and

cultural background. All plans are in line with the placing authority care plans. Young people are involved in the care planning process and contribute to their plans through regular internal reviews. As a result of this process, young people are able to comment on specific areas of their care that they feel require attention or adjustment. Young people are empowered by this process.

The home works in partnership with local health agencies to ensure young people have access to services to meet their specific needs. Emotional health and psychological well-being is supported by all care staff in conjunction with an internal psychologist. Young people have unique opportunities to explore a wide range of positive and purposeful outdoor pursuits as part of their package of care. Experienced and qualified staff encourage both physical health and new experiences through well-planned and executed excursions. Activities in the local community are encouraged also. For example, one young person joined a local boxing club and another has regular guitar lessons. This not only promotes young people's sense of identity, but also stimulates new interests and skills.

Young people's well-being is at the centre of staff's practice. The staff team are extremely experienced and knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities in working with young people with complex needs. A social worker for one young person stated 'The home have been very supportive in terms of meeting the needs of this young person. Even the local authority LAC (looked after children) psychotherapist was very impressed with the staff team and commented that they always have the young person in mind.' Staff are proactive and consistent in the implementation of boundaries and promoting engagement in education and activities which promotes positive behaviour and personal and social development. As a result, young people make substantial progress in every aspect of their lives. One young person stated 'I am proud of what I have achieved.'

Equality and diversity needs are met well by the home. Plans clearly indicate the cultural needs of individuals and how they will be addressed. These include purchasing religious books, sourcing local places of worship and encouraging the use of individual's first languages. For example, a member of staff in the company attends the home once a week to spend time with a young person who is from the same country. This allows the young person the opportunity to discuss any additional need and also use their native language in order to promote their sense of identity.

The building is listed as special architectural and historical interest. This makes repair work both lengthy and costly. Currently, work is taking place to the external stone work and an outbuilding which is being converted into a toilet with disabled access for the school. This has been suitably risk assessed around the health and safety of staff, residents and visitors. The layout of the ground floor of the home is in the planning stage of redevelopment to ensure best use of space for young people. This will benefit young people as it will allow for the communal areas to be closer together with less imposition from staff offices.

## **Safeguarding children and young people**

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

Young people confirm they feel safe living at the home. There are clear and effective strategies in place to ensure the safety of young people while enabling them to take age-appropriate risks. This helps young people develop their own protective skills in order to help themselves in later life. Documentation held by the home for each young person is accurate and comprehensive. Areas of risk and need are identified precisely and included in care plans and risk assessments. One social worker stated 'I have faith in the home's protection of vulnerable young people.' Care is taken in the management of the dynamics of the group both inside the home and when out on excursions. Staff are imaginative in their approach and apply consistent and individualised behaviour management strategies in their daily practice. All staff are fully aware of safeguarding procedures and receive regular training in this area. As a result, even the most vulnerable young people develop strong sense of safety and well-being.

The home cares for young people in crisis. The needs of the young people are complex and their behaviours can often be extremely challenging. Where physical restraint is necessary, it is carried out in a proportionate way in accordance with legislation to safeguard young people. Positive behaviour is promoted well by a passionate and experienced staff team. This allows for constructive attachments to be formed with young people. Staff are innovative and successful in de-escalation techniques which reduces the risk of using restraint. Staff use their positive relationships with young people in dealing with incidents and explore with individuals alternative strategies in dealing with their emotions. This enables young people to better manage their behaviour in the future.

The home works in close partnership with the local police, in particular, the vulnerable person's unit. Staff ensure appropriate information is shared, in line with legislation surrounding confidentiality, to safeguard young people from potential risk of harm. This partnership has been successful in reducing levels of risk taking and offending behaviour for some young people. Episodes of young people going missing have also reduced for individuals since their admission. The reduction in these behaviours has enabled positive transitions for young people to new placements.

## **Leadership and management**

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

The leadership and management of the home is innovative and effective which stimulates the enthusiasm of staff. Requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection have been acted on and developments in these areas have had a positive impact on the quality of care and outcomes for young people. Internal reviews are completed with young people on a regular basis which acts as a consultation tool to review the quality of care for young people. The manager uses this as part of the monitoring process under regulation 34. Other monitoring processes are robust and there is a clear emphasis on reviewing the progress of

young people to ensure their plan of care is effective.

A comprehensive development plan has been established which incorporates all aspects of the service. Plans for improvement are realistic and appropriate for the provision. There is a clear vision by the management to further improve outcomes for young people based on previous successes and experiences.

The manager has built up strong links with local services and agencies in order to ensure young people have access to all appropriate agencies to meet their needs. The home works in close partnership with local police and the youth offending team (YOT) in the management of risk and offending behaviour. A member of staff from the YOT stated 'This is one of the best children's homes I have worked with especially around communication'.

There is clear evidence in the extensive documentation held on young people's files to demonstrate the impact and value of living at the home has had on individuals. Most young people have made significant progress in all areas of their lives. This is achieved by a consistent and experienced staff team, led by a passionate management team, who have high aspirations for the young people in their care.

Staff receive regular supervision, annual appraisal and benefit from an internal training manager. All areas of mandatory training are covered with staff and updates are given regularly. There are also other courses available which are relevant to staff's roles and all staff have completed, or are enrolled on the level 3 Diploma or above. As a result, staff are well equipped to work effectively and dynamically with challenging and complex young people.

## 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.