

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Susan Southey
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is registered to accommodate three boys with emotional or behavioural difficulties. Education is provided through the home's independent school and local education authority provision, when possible.

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**.

The Registered Manager is experienced and manages the home professionally. There are no breaches of the regulations or national minimum standards identified. Monitoring of the home is robust and development plans are in place to promote further improvements.

Young people are cared in line with comprehensive plans that promote their independence. Dedicated staff support young people to learn the skills required to promote their successful evolution to adulthood.

Young people have exceptional relationships with staff and their views are considered paramount to the running of the home. They have many forums to have their wishes heard and acted on where appropriate. All young people are on independence plans and are in control of their own money. Therefore, they are afforded further opportunities to make their own choices.

Young people have finished compulsory education and some have made significant progress by attending college regularly to gain additional qualifications. Other young people have made good progress seeking employment and continuing with education on site.

Staff have excellent relationships with other agencies who value their care provision. These partnerships are used to effectively to promote better outcomes for young people when barriers prevent them accessing services. Multi-agency challenges are made to secure appropriate provision for all young people to reach their full

potential.

Young people say they are safe in the home, and robust safeguarding procedures are in place. The processes to protect young people from harm are outstanding. Young people rarely go missing but when incidents happen the procedures followed consistently promote the safety and welfare of vulnerable young people. In addition, risk assessments fully support young people approaching adulthood to minimise risks associated with potential hazards they encounter as part of growing up.

Outcomes for children and young people

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

Some young people make exceptional progress in education and attend college regularly. They flourish having made successful transitions from small education units. Young people study vocational qualifications to support future employment. Professionals praise young people's success; with one saying, 'the changes they have made from their starting point are amazing.' Other young people make positive progression by pro-actively seeking employment. In addition, they receive on-site education to enhance their skills. Young people who succeed in education have greater choices in future life.

Young people make positive progress in their evolution to adulthood supported with comprehensive plans and instruction from efficient staff. They receive an allowance, which they proficiently budget. Young people demonstrate their ability to shop and prepare meals in addition to undertaking their own domestic chores. This supports self-sufficiency when they leave the home. Furthermore, young people are now accessing public transport to attend college and contact visits to advance their independence.

Young people have regular contact with family members to promote their awareness of belonging and understanding of their background. Staff support young people to have family visits both in the community and in the home environment. In addition, they are encouraged to maintain peer friendships with opportunities to have friends visit the home. Young people who are able to sustain attachments have a greater sense of inclusion and self-worth.

Young people enjoy good health having regular medicals and attending routine appointments. They are encouraged to make healthy food choices and cook nutritious meals to support healthy lifestyles. Young people have exceptional access to services that meet their psychological needs. They attend regular appointments with a psychotherapist commissioned by the home. Furthermore, they engage with child and adolescent mental health services. Young people who access appropriate support to meet their physical and psychological needs have greater chance of maintaining good health.

Quality of care

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

Young people have excellent relationships with staff and each other. Daily residents' meetings take place giving young people opportunities to express their views and make requests. They plan their evening and decide through mutual agreement what programmes they will watch on the communal television. In addition, young people use this forum and regular key worker sessions to make requests and seek solutions to any concerns they raise. Their opinions are highly valued and their requests acted on where possible. An example where young people's wishes were granted are their highly individualised bedrooms painted to their specifications. Young people feel respected when their input significantly influences the running of the home.

Young people feel supported when they make complaints. They say that the manager investigated their concerns and are satisfied with the outcomes. There are robust policies in place and the recording of the complaints is efficient and demonstrates consultation with the young person who had the grievance. Young people also access advocates to promote their rights and empower them to challenge decisions.

Staff build effective relationships with other agencies to support young people to reach their full potential. In partnership with other professionals staff advocate for young people to access services. Young people have better outcomes when they receive appropriate care to meet their specialist needs.

Highly effective behaviour plans are used consistently by staff who set clear boundaries for young people. Physical intervention is extremely rare and when used is appropriate and recorded correctly. When young people are upset and present with challenging behaviour staff are normally able to use de-escalation techniques to manage the situation. They have developed constructive relationships with young people and have excellent communication skills which promote increased positive behaviours.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people say that they feel safe in the home and are confident that competent staff protect them. Rigorous risk assessments are reviewed regularly as the needs of young people change. Young people are working towards independence and staff have considered the additional hazards posed with increased self-reliance and produced plans to minimise potential risks. Examples of risk management plans include 'use of an iron' and 'additional time off site'. Young people benefit from achieving their goals while preventing harm through robust risk management procedures.

Young people seldom go missing from the home and prolonged incidents are infrequent. On rare occasions where young people are missing for extended periods

staff execute protocols and procedures efficiently. Staff successfully support young people's safety when absent with excellent communication skills. They maintain daily phone contact and closely monitor young people's movements. In addition, they consult with placing authorities immediately and facilitate meetings to agree shared strategies to promote young people's safe return.

Staff recruitment is robustly monitored and applicants are carefully vetted in the recruitment process. All staff are required to obtain enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks. In addition, managers check gaps in employment and verify references. Suitable measures taken to prevent unsuitable people working with young people support their safety.

Vigilant staff promote the safety of young people in the home environment. They conduct regular fire drills and all young people are aware of the evacuation procedures. Young people whose medication impacts on their ability to wake in the case of emergencies have additional risk assessments in place to promote their safety. Furthermore, staff regularly check emergency equipment to ensure its efficiency.

Leadership and management

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

The Registered Manager efficiently manages the home in partnership with a competent Assistant Manager. They demonstrate effective management and compliance with the regulations and standards. Monitoring is robust with regular visits undertaken by independent visitors to review the home. In addition, the Registered Manager undertakes internal checks monthly and submits reports to Ofsted at regular intervals. Managers address any shortfalls identified through quality monitoring in a timely manner. In addition, comprehensive development plans demonstrate capacity for continued improvements.

Young people benefit from exceptional care provision executed by very experienced staff. Many have worked for the home since its registration. This promotes consistency of care and stability for young people. Staff remain highly enthusiastic and embrace the numerous opportunities available in the annual training programme. Young people's care provision is improved when managers develop a proficient workforce through regular training.

Staff say they are very well supported by managers. They receive regular supervision from competent and knowledgeable individuals. Staff attend weekly staff meetings and additional 'turn around' meetings to discuss the individual needs of young people. Staff say this gives them an opportunity to reach solutions with staff contributing their skills and knowledge to promote effective care planning.

Young people benefit from living in a home that is well maintained and comfortable. Managers demonstrate commitment to making improvements to the home with major changes to the décor currently taking place. Most rooms are now completed.

In addition, new flooring has further enhanced the home's interior. Young people's comfort and sense of well-being is supported when their environment is pleasant and meets all their needs appropriately.

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.