

## Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC033152
<b>Inspection date</b>	11/10/2012
<b>Inspector</b>	Lynne Busby
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	19/01/2012
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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

This service is a children's home run by a local authority. The home is registered to provide a service for up to six children, who have a learning disability and may also have a physical disability.

The home offers a short-term respite service only; no one is accommodated on a long-term basis and one of the six places is used only for emergency short breaks.

### 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 have excellent personalised care that fully identifies their individual needs. Care plans have been improved and provide individually tailored care with measurable targets which are regularly reviewed. Staff have strong relationships with the young people. As a respite unit there is excellent matching of groups of children who use the service at the same time. This has enabled children to build positive relationships with each other.

Parents and social workers report very positively about the quality of care the young people receive and the exceptional progress they make during their time at the home. A parent said 'the staff genuinely care about the children and there is always a happy and relaxed atmosphere, I have every confidence in their ability to keep children safe and meet their needs. My child asks to go there which is a good indicator of how happy they are.'

The home is very well run and the manager and staff are committed to driving improvement and maximising opportunities for young people to develop and progress. The manager and staff have excellent working relationships with parents and health and social care professionals. This ensures that young people are central to the decision making and have the best possible outcomes.

Young people are consulted using their preferred method of communication which

enables all young people to contribute to the day-to-day running of the home. Methods for engaging young people are varied and ensure their views are captured to support continual improvement of the quality of care provided by the home.

Young people say they feel safe and are safe. Skilled staff ensure young people are provided with information on how to keep themselves safe. The environment is physically safe and appropriately secure to protect young people from harm.

There is one new recommendation for improvement made at this inspection which relates to the training of staff in the Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma. This does not impact on the care of the young people as the majority of staff are trained to this level and above.

## Areas for improvement

### Recommendations

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

- ensure all existing staff, including night staff, have attained a minimum level 3 qualification in Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma. (NMS 18.5)

### Outcomes for children and young people

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

Young people make exceptional progress from their starting points. The progress may be small to some but can be a real achievement such as tolerating or touching a new food. All achievements are recognised and celebrated by staff. Parents and social workers have identified significant improvements in extending food groups that young people will try and enjoy. This has been particularly positive where young people have very limited diets. Other areas include improved sleep patterns and personal hygiene such as toileting, which has developed young people's confidence and self-esteem and emotional well-being.

Young people's health needs are very well addressed within their care plans and supported by risk assessments for areas such as epilepsy. Staff are well trained to meet health needs and are very clear about what responsibilities and decisions are delegated to them. Young people and their parents benefit from excellent links with health agencies who work closely to ensure health needs are identified and met.

Young people benefit from meals which are nutritious and well prepared and presented. Young people can make choices and encouragement is given for those who have restricted diets. This is done at the young person's pace. Staff promote five vegetables and fruit a day with incentive charts and young people enjoy completing these. Meal times are social occasions and staff use this time to talk to young people about their day, and seek their views about the home. Young people

are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles and staff provide a variety of ways to exercise, such as walking and trampolining, and take into account young people's different mobility needs.

There are very strong links with local schools that the young people attend. Education staff said, 'there is a high level of involvement and they work collaboratively to consistently meet young people's needs.' Staff visit the school to share practice in managing behaviours and helping young people achieve their targets. This ensures young people are supported to progress.

Parents said that the home is welcoming and staff are excellent at communicating with them. Staff give a full picture of the young person's time at the home including positive aspects as well as any incidents which may occur. They have a few new staff and the manager ensures parents are given names and photographs so they can prepare their children before they stay at the service. This was very well received by parents. Also, for those young people who find change difficult, this assisted with the transition and is excellent practice.

## Quality of care

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

Young people benefit from excellent relationships with staff. They provide a warm and nurturing environment where young people can relax and enjoy their visit. Young people say they like coming to the home. Staff are very aware of young people's individuality, background and identity.

The manager and staff ensure they have comprehensive information about a young person prior to staying at the home. A home visit is conducted which identifies with the parents all aspects of a young person's needs which includes culture and religion. This information is reflected in the 'All about me' information and the care plan which ensures that there is personalised care and measurable targets which are achievable. These are regularly reviewed and information is pictorial and shared wherever possible with the young people.

Staff are knowledgeable about young people's differing communication styles and provide a range of opportunities in which they can give their views, including one-to-one sessions, group meetings, reviews and informally at mealtimes. Young people are given choices throughout their visit such as meals and what activities they would like to do. They have recently been consulted about how they would like to personalise their rooms when they stay and all have chosen their own duvets. Young people can also take part in an external group which seeks their views about the wider service.

Young people are supported to make a complaint. The complaints leaflet is pictorial; in addition the home has a grumbles book and any concerns raised are acted upon quickly by the manager. There is an advocate available to the children. The advocate has recently attended Makaton training to enhance their skills in communicating with

the young people and seeking their views.

Young people regardless of their disability enjoy a wide range of activities. These include going to the park, local youth club and trips such as going on a barge and museums. One young person explained how they had been able to 'drive the barge'. All activities are captured in pictures which young people enjoy looking at. These also form part of a memory book which young people get when they leave the home. All activities help young people expand their horizons and say 'the home is good fun.'

Young people's holistic health needs are well met and a specialist nurse commented that 'staff are excellent at picking up on any health issues the young people are presenting and acting upon them quickly.' Staff are well trained in specific health care and the administration of medication systems are robust and accountable to safeguard young people from harm.

The home is centrally located with good access to leisure facilities. It is a single storey building which has been adapted to include wheelchair access and moving and handling aids. The home is well maintained and is furnished and decorated to provide a 'homely' environment. Young people have their own room which affords privacy, the communal areas includes an open plan lounge and dining room, a sensory room and games room. The outside offers excellent space with a large garden with specialised play equipment, a sensory garden and a covered play area which gives all young people an opportunity to enjoy the garden all year round.

### **Safeguarding children and young people**

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

Young people say they feel safe and are safe. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of what to do in the event of a safeguarding incident or where there is any suspicion of harm or abuse. They are aware of the procedures both for safeguarding and whistleblowing and would follow them in practice should the need arise.

Young people have complex needs and are vulnerable. They never go missing because of good supervision and the vigilance of staff. There are clear protocols and procedures in place which staff are aware of should this occur. Through staff observation they have noticed some bullying and have acted quickly to stop this by educating young people through activities and discussion in meetings. They have also looked at group dynamics and matching of young people when they stay at the home. Young people said that staff stop bullying happening.

Young people are well supported in developing acceptable behaviours and where necessary skilled staff diffuse incidents. The use of restraint is minimal and is only used as a last resort as a safety measure to protect young people. Sanctions are used infrequently as alternative strategies are used to promote positive behaviours.

Young people are kept safe by staff's vigilance. Regular health and safety and

maintenance checks ensure young people live in a safe environment. Fire evacuations are held regularly to make sure young people are familiar with the procedure. Risk assessments ensure risks are minimised to provide a safe environment for young people to stay. Young people are protected by sound procedures for recruiting and selecting staff, and sufficiently robust arrangements for visitors protect young people from harm.

## **Leadership and management**

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

This is an exceptionally well-managed home. The Registered Manager is well qualified and experienced and leads a team who are committed and enthusiastic to providing high quality care and excellent outcomes for young people. Staff are well supported through supervision, annual appraisals and team meetings. This gives staff opportunities to discuss and reflect on practice issues.

Young people's needs are met through the provision of sufficient staff who are mainly qualified and experienced. The majority of staff have been trained to at least National Vocational Qualification level 3 in Caring for Children and Young people; with the exception of night staff who are trained to level 2. This is not a major shortfall but limits night staff's opportunity to progress and develop their skills. In all other areas staff have excellent opportunities to attend training that develops and enhances their skills and knowledge so they can fully meet young people's specific needs.

There is a rigorous internal monitoring system in place which relates to the quality of care provided and is completed monthly by the manager. This is collated by a senior manager every six months which identifies any areas for improvement and is very comprehensive. This is now forwarded to Ofsted in response to a requirement made at the last inspection. In addition, external monitoring is completed monthly this process has recently been reviewed to provide a more in-depth quality report. There is a development plan which identifies areas for improvement which is reviewed and incorporates targets which are realistic.

The home has a clear statement of purpose which identifies the ethos, aims and objectives of the home and is available to interested parties. Each child has a pictorial guide that provides them with information about the home. This is excellent making it specific to the child. There is also a welcome guide for the parents which summaries what they can expect from the home.

Records are clear, up to date and stored securely. Files are well constructed and give an excellent understanding of the young person's life.

## 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.