

## Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspection date</b>	25/06/2013
<b>Inspector</b>	Paul Taylor / Ann-Marie Born
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Secure Unit

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	15/01/2013
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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

This secure children's home is operated by a local authority and is approved by the Secretary of State to restrict young people's liberty. Education is provided on site.

The children's home can accommodate up to 18 young people, who are aged between 10 and 17 years. Admission of any young person over the age of 10 but under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State.

This inspection has the purpose of informing the Secretary of State on the continuing suitability for this provision to operate as a secure unit to restrain children's liberty.

### 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 **good**.

This was an unannounced, full inspection of both the residential and education provision of this centre. The centre's fitness to continue to offer secure accommodation to young people was also assessed. A recommendation will be made to the Secretary of State for a three year approval to be given for the centre to continue to operate as a secure unit.

The centre provides high quality and very well-planned care packages. Excellent assessment and corroboration from various professional disciplines ensure that young people have their needs met to a high standard.

The views of the young people are valued and encouraged, however, the use of the newly introduced 'grumbles books' has not been consistently implemented. This is now a recommendation.

Relationships developed between the young people and members of staff are positive, supportive and nurturing. This underpins the emotional security that the young people feel when they are at the centre. Young people benefit from a particularly high standard of health care and their emotional and psychological well-

being is promoted to an excellent standard. It is clear that the value of education is embedded in the culture of the unit and this is also of a very high standard. One external professional commented that 'this place turns people's lives around.'

Young people say they feel safe at the centre and robust systems ensure that their well-being is given a high priority and close attention.

A very experienced management team has a clear vision for the development of the centre and is reflective about practice and outcomes achieved for the young people.

One specific incident leading to a potential serious security breach had not been robustly addressed in a timely manner. This is a significant oversight and has resulted in a recommendation.

Other recommendations made at this inspection include: the need to ensure that young people's views are consistently recorded after periods of single separation and a need to redecorate and deep clean the young people's kitchens.

## **Areas for improvement**

### **Recommendations**

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

- ensure that the home provides comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated. This is in relation to the young people's kitchens (NMS10.3)
- ensure children are provided with appropriate education in the home particularly with regards to improving the vocational offer to ensure all young people can prepare for and experience the world of work and develop practical skills to improve their life chances when they leave (NMS 23.11)
- ensure children are provided with appropriate education in the home particularly with regards to increasing the use of ICT so that young people can achieve a functional skill award in this area of work (NMS 23.11)
- ensure children are provided with appropriate education in the home particularly with regards to minimising the level of disruption by authorised absences during lessons (NMS 23.11)
- ensure that young people are offered the opportunity to read and add a permanent comment to the record of their separation (NMS 23.13)
- ensure there is an appropriate means for sending complaints or representations directly and unopened to a designated complaints officer outside the establishment or to an advocate for the child. This is in relation to young people being able to access complaints forms without having to ask members of staff for them (NMS 23.14)

- ensure that the premises are fit for the purposes of providing effective care, protecting young people from harm, maintaining adequate security and are consistent with any Government guidance on this matter. This is in relation to addressing potential breaches of security promptly and robustly. (NMS 23.15)

## Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **outstanding**.

Young people make significant progress at this centre, particularly when bearing in mind their starting points at the time of their admission. They benefit from bespoke detailed care packages which address their well-being in a caring and nurturing manner. As a result of this, young people are able to make sense of their lives and to take the opportunity to develop positive coping skills, make changes and to have hopes and aspirations for their future.

The young people benefit from clear, caring boundaries which underpin the positive relationships that they have with the adults who care for them. A young person commented, 'There's always someone there for me, I've done so well here.' Young people feel involved in their care and also feel that their opinions are listened to and valued.

Young people benefit from a particularly high standard of health care. The multi-disciplinary expertise available to them on site ensures that their health needs can be addressed swiftly and effectively. They also benefit from a centre where healthy lifestyles, through exercise and healthy eating, are embedded in the routine.

A strength of the centre is the standard of education offered. Young people prosper from high quality education. Staff have high aspirations for the young people and encourage them to develop their abilities and potential. Young people are able to develop life and vocational skills and are also able to take examinations as a result of the progress they make at the centre. A young person said, 'School is the best thing here.' Success is celebrated through assemblies and certificates. Young people's art is displayed around the centre as a means of showing how they achieve excellent work which can be enjoyed and praised by others.

Young people are able to contact families and friends via the telephones in their rooms. Additionally, they are able to receive visitors and maintain face-to-face contact with people important to them. The reasons for restrictions on contact or the need for it to be supervised are made clear to the young people. Staff support is readily available to young people if they find contact stressful or upsetting. This further enhances their emotional safety and well-being.

Young people are well prepared for their transition back into the community or to other settings. They benefit from a centre where members of staff will advocate for them strongly in order to plan for their next move. Enriching activities, such as drama, art, and various sports are also available to help develop confidence, social skills and a sense of achievement. Coaching in activities such as football and dance is

particularly popular.

## Quality of care

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

Young people benefit from living in an inclusive and enriching environment that provides them with an outstanding standard of care. Positive responses received from young people, parents and other professionals support this view. For example, improvements in young people's behaviour and outlook were highlighted by visiting professionals at a young person's statutory review.

The strong relationships built between young people and staff encourage young people to settle and start to develop trust in adults who act as good role models. These relationships are robust and can withstand the impact of testing and challenging periods. As a result, young people engage positively with staff and move towards adopting a safer and more acceptable lifestyle than the one they pursued previously. This is reflected in the views of one young person who said, 'I was all over the place when I first came here, but I have been doing a lot better and now and I am on gold.'

Young people's views, thoughts, observations and requests are captured in a variety of forums designed to promote on-going consultation. Young people report they are happy that staff do listen and regularly take their views and requests into account. For example, the views of young person are gathered prior to their statutory review and then discussed and incorporated into the agreed plan for leaving the centre. This process gives young people a clearer sense of direction and input regarding their own future.

Another young person spoke positively about their recent participation with the centre's council meetings. A formal forum convened monthly where young people are given the responsibility to put forward their own views and those of their peers. The young person demonstrated a clear sense of responsibility, pride and achievement when discussing this matter.

High quality planning documentation identifies individual needs, with detailed plans, strategies and risk assessments put into place to meet those needs. The centre has developed its own procedures to monitor and evaluate plans effectively. Each young person's plan, strategies and assessment of risk are reviewed and updated at least every three weeks through the centre's own rigorous internal reviewing system. This ensures plans and risk assessments are current. Additionally, statutory reviews take place where a similar, thorough process is undertaken.

The centre has continued to develop and improve its own resources and facilities to address the identified needs of young people. For example, a whole range of services are available on site to address any specialist health issues a young person may have.

In addition, young people discuss and reflect upon the reasons why they have received a secure order and the circumstances around this. This gives them opportunities to consider their previous actions, assess the impact on themselves and others and look towards their future. Young people work directly with the centre's own specialist staff team throughout their time at the centre and work both individually and in groups. This is an area that has improved significantly since the previous full inspection in both the resources available on site and in its delivery.

A diverse group of young people are looked after by a highly motivated staff group that itself is diverse in age, gender and ethnicity. This provides young people with carers they can identify with, which contribute towards building trusting relationships and creating an environment where they feel comfortable and safe.

Individuality is valued and achievement is celebrated. This is captured for young people in certificates and photographs as well as in the rewards systems. Religious, cultural and identity needs are identified quickly and supported. Theme days are celebrated in the centre and young people can meet ministers of their own religion if they wish.

Activities and leisure interests are blended effectively with the more formalised programmed work. This provides young people with a structured enrichment programme, targeting individual need. For example, enrichment activities during education breaks are designed to be educational as well as enjoyable. Activities such as art and dance encourage the young people's creativity as well as enhancing their sense of achievement and self-worth. Young people are encouraged to be active through regular exercise which can be achieved through the wide range of physical activities provided. Young people speak well about the range of activities that take place.

## **Safeguarding children and young people**

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

Young people unanimously state they are safe and feel safe within the centre. Excellent assessment processes, including the identification of all religious, cultural and special needs, are commenced upon admission. These ensure that individual support programmes are tailored to meet identified areas of vulnerability. Young people benefit from exceptional partnership working with mental health professionals which allows for direct intervention as well as specific training for staff. As a result staff members employ consistent, targeted practice which assists in keeping young people safe.

Robust bullying policies are stringently applied and fully understood by all young people and staff. Episodes of bullying are addressed immediately with a 'no blame' approach. This ensures that young people are provided with the opportunity to learn from such episodes thereby improving social skills and the well-being of all concerned. A young person said, 'I feel safe because there is always someone around to make sure I am alright.'

Positive behaviour is promoted at all times by the committed and experienced staff team. Strong individual risk assessments and behaviour management plans identify young people's trigger points and areas of need. These are supported by the comprehensive reward system. Young people take pride in achieving progression through this system from bronze to graduate. Young people are further enabled to address negative behaviours and identify more positive coping strategies and incentives through the key work system and 'Post Incident Analysis Sessions'. Their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth are enhanced as they learn appropriate communication skills and aspire to achieve. This can include negotiating a daily incentive programme. Young people's behaviour improves as they engage with the reward and incentive programme. A young person stated, 'I am really pleased with the changes I have made in my behaviour. I wouldn't have come this far if I hadn't been here.'

There is good, strong communication between education and care staff. This ensures that all staff are aware of any tensions between individuals and potential for scapegoating as well as swift recognition of any areas of achievement. Young people recognise that staff know them well and feel cared for and protected. As a result young people's sense of self-worth and self-esteem are improved as they feel valued. A young person said, 'I feel safe because staff know what I need and help me with that.'

Staff are well trained in the use of physical restraint and training is kept up to date. This is complemented by comprehensive individual risk assessments. These ensure that staff are aware of any identified physical, psychological or health needs a young person may have. Management and staff have a thorough understanding of situations which may trigger negative behaviours and know all of the young people in their care extremely well. Physical intervention is only used as a last resort and to safeguard young people. Strong monitoring processes are utilised to examine every episode of physical intervention. These include the scrutiny of all records by the management team, random viewing of closed-circuit television footage and formal debriefing of staff. Any identified concerns are promptly addressed. Consequently young people are being safeguarded as practice is safe, of a good standard and give staff and young people the opportunity to learn from each episode.

Staff record each incident of single separation in unit log books and the amount of time a young person is removed from the group. These are complemented by individual 'single separation record' sheets which record observation with the opportunity for the young person to comment upon the incident. However, these are newly implemented and not fully operational across the three units, therefore, their use is inconsistent and not measurable.

A range of varied and relevant sanctions are used appropriately. Young people's comments are recorded following any sanction as is the effectiveness of the intervention. As a result young people start to take responsibility for their behaviours, develop an understanding of the consequences of their actions and build self-esteem and feelings of self-worth. A young person said, 'I know I will be listened to and staff do listen to me even when there have been incidents.'

A 'grumbles book' system has recently been introduced in order for young people to share concerns before these become a complaint. This is a positive development which will help ensure young people's wishes and feelings are heard. However, this approach is inconsistent across the units at present. Young people confirm that they are able to use the complaints system and request contact with the independent advocate through staff members. Nevertheless, young people state that they do not like having to ask staff for complaints forms. Their opportunities for making anonymous complaints are reduced and young people would rather complaints forms were available openly on the unit or in their rooms.

Young people are safeguarded by strong links with external advocacy services. An external advocate visits the centre on a bi-weekly basis providing young people with the opportunity to speak with them in private if they wish. A young person said, 'She comes twice a week and I can always phone her if I want to.' The independent advocate stated, 'I would say young people are safeguarded here. I haven't had any young people come to me to say they felt unsafe.'

Child protection matters are managed effectively and help promote young people's safety. Staff are trained and knowledgeable in the home's child protection procedures which are complimentary to the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Any identified concerns are swiftly addressed through close liaison with relevant agencies and professionals. A local authority designated officer said, 'They do take advice, they make referrals appropriately, they make decisions promptly and ensure advice is taken.'

Appropriate locally agreed protocols protect young people if they go missing from the centre. There have not been any episodes of young people absconding from the centre or while out in the community since the last inspection in January 2013.

Robust recruitment processes ensure that young people are cared for by people who have had all of the required checks before they start work in the centre. Young people are safeguarded by these measures. Young people participate in the recruitment process which bolsters their self-esteem and increases their confidence in staff. A young person said, 'Being here is the safest I have ever felt because no one can get in and hurt me.'

Strong health and safety practices, including fire evacuation procedures and safeguarding young people enhance their physical well-being. Young people's privacy and dignity are promoted by the design of suitable washing and bathing facilities. The premises are fit for purpose, well maintained and are appropriately secure.

## **Leadership and management**

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

The centre places a priority in achieving excellent outcomes for the young people. A very experienced manager provides strong leadership to a very committed and

insightful management team.

The management team is reflective about practice and reviews performance with a view to improving the quality and delivery of the service. There is a well thought through development plan in place and this provides clear and high aspirations to enhance what the centre has to offer. Targets put in place by the previous plan have been achieved and have led to significant improvements in areas such as the provision of health care. This is now a significant area of strength for the centre.

There was one requirement made at the last inspection. This has been addressed and the centre now ensures that the effectiveness of sanctions is recorded and assessed as part of ensuring each young person's behavioural management plan is effective. One recommendation made at the last inspection has not been effectively addressed. While the home has a format in place to record the views of young people after they have had periods of single separation, this has not been achieved consistently. The recommendation therefore remains.

Young people, external professionals and parents are able to have a good understanding of the aims and objectives of the unit. Young people's handbooks are available and interpretative services also support and supplement communication with young people for whom English is not their primary language. This enables all young people, from whatever background, to have knowledge and understanding of the aims of the centre. The centre is very good at ensuring all relevant parties know about the service provided and the objectives of any placement.

Young people's progress is measured and assessed to ensure that they are benefitting from their placement at the centre. Data is collated from different disciplines operating on site such as; health, education and care, to tangibly evidence improvements and progress.

Complaints are generally addressed in a timely manner. However, records do not always show how they have been resolved. Additionally, young people can make comments about their care in 'grumbles books' if they do not wish to make formal complaints. This gives them a chance to discuss issues on a daily basis with members of staff. The books are also not consistently used in practice which means that some young people's issues are not always effectively addressed.

Monitoring by external managers provides further assessment of the quality of care. Shortfalls are identified in the reports written as a result of these visits and actions plans put in place to address them. The Registered Manager also monitors all matters outlined in regulation and endorses the records to show that this has been achieved. The systems operated by the centre ensure that the quality and effectiveness of care is scrutinised to a very good standard.

Maintenance of the home is achieved to a good standard. A responsive maintenance team ensures that any repair issues are addressed promptly and effectively. The small kitchens in the young people's units, which are mainly used for the preparation of snacks and drinks, are in need of either refurbishment or a deep clean. Shortfalls

included peeling paint and dust on surfaces above food preparation areas. The main kitchen has however attained a top level rating for cleanliness from the local environmental health officer.

An experienced and committed staff team provide young people with an excellent standard of consistent care and support. All care staff either hold or are working toward the required qualification in care. A comprehensive training programme enables them to continually update and develop their skills. All members of staff have regular supervision and appraisals to ensure that they are competent and able to support the young people in their care.

The home rigorously monitors the frequency of reviews. There is an embedded culture where members of staff will advocate very strongly on behalf of the young people to ensure that reviews take place. This was seen to be effectively implemented in practice. Additionally, members of staff carefully prepare young people to attend reviews and to have a say about their plans. The approach to valuing young people's right to have their reviews in a timely manner is a strength of the service.

Records maintained give a very good history of each young person's experience of living the centre. They show how progress and what the aspirations and targets are for each young person. All records are stored securely.

However, a recent potentially very serious breach in security issue had not been forwarded to Ofsted. The issue has now been resolved, but was not addressed promptly when it first arose. This led to an unacceptable delay in ensuring that the potential breach in security had been effectively investigated and robustly dealt with. This was despite the issue been known within the centre and to managers for some considerable time. Subsequently security processes and systems have been reviewed.

### **Outcomes in education and related learning activities**

The outcomes in education and related learning activities are **outstanding**.

Young people make outstanding progress from a low starting point during their period in education. They develop positive attitudes to learning and arrive at lessons ready to work. Their attendance is excellent and behaviour is good. Standards of work are good in most subject areas and generally commensurate with their age and ability in mainstream school. Work files are well organised and young people are very proud of their achievements. They are confident and happy to share their work and discuss their progress. Young people enjoy education because they achieve very well and their success is regularly celebrated through lively school assemblies, special events and visual display around the centre.

Almost all pupils have low literacy and numeracy skills when they arrive, with many having poor experiences of school and poor attendance for long periods of time. The quality of initial and diagnostic assessment is of a consistently high standard, and is

prompt and effective. Academic progress is tracked carefully and comprehensively, showing young people's levels of ability from when they first arrive. Subject based improvement targets are set for each young person on a weekly basis and this contributes to consistently good or very good progress across all curriculum areas being made during their stay. For example, in both literacy and numeracy young people on average make over twice the sub-level of progress expected of pupils in all schools nationally. This is outstanding.

Educational achievement and progress are regularly reviewed to ensure key education and learning related information can be readily shared with key workers, professionals and other establishments when young people move on. All young people leave the centre with at least one national qualification and many leave with a basket of higher level qualifications including GCSEs, functional skills level 1 and 2 qualifications, AiM Step up awards and AQA unit awards. This prepares them well for transition to further education or training.

Young people often return to take external qualifications if their release date falls before the examinations. One young person, who has recently left to live in semi-independent accommodation close by, has taken GCSEs and still attends some education and work experience as part of planned transition.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Close attention has been paid to improving the quality of teaching and learning and all lessons were judged to be good or better. In addition the very strong learning support programme has been effective in helping young people achieve challenging personal targets particularly in English, science and mathematics.

Schemes of work and lesson plans are thorough. There is very good matching of learner's ability and need to personal work plans in all lessons. This ensures that young people make consistently good progress, with a keen focus on specific, measurable and realistic target setting in each subject area. Young people often surpass the level of progress expected of them. Good examples of this were in most areas and specifically in art, English, design technology, science and mathematics. Working on group tasks is less common, with the exception of physical education and PSHE, and discussions in tutorial groups.

Lessons are well planned and teachers use a variety of teaching aids and resources to help learners of mixed ability gain in confidence and competence. Young people are fully engaged in individual programmes of work and expectations for them to do well are high. Questioning by teachers helps to stretch young people's knowledge, understanding and personal enquiry. Teachers regularly encourage and praise young people for their effort and contributions during lessons and the quality of written feedback on work is generally clear and constructive. In a minority of lessons, however, written comments, though positive, are too brief and do not suggest how work can be further improved and knowledge extended. Young people are consistently engaged in discussions about the content and quality of lessons and routinely complete evaluations about their own work.

Young people are respectful of their teachers and each other which results in a relaxed and purposeful atmosphere in most lessons. Behaviour is generally good and well managed. Incidences of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with quickly and effectively, responses being proportionate and fair. Young people also felt the points system of rewarding good behaviour and attitude to learning was also fair and worked well as a motivator.

The curriculum provided by education is appropriate and teachers work well together to coordinate subjects, activities and themes when it is possible. Core curriculum subjects are prioritised so that young people can begin to bridge the gaps in their knowledge and learning. Good attention is given to enhance young people's functional skills in English and mathematics and this has become well integrated across nearly all subject areas. Many learners have gained Level 1 and 2 qualifications. Opportunities to take part in a range of sports and physical activity during the education day and in leisure time are valued by most young people and will often lead to accreditation. Exploration of creative arts through music, art, design technology and dance are also very popular. These areas have been greatly enhanced through successful bidding for external funding by the art teacher. The quality of art and design work is outstanding and provides an impressive back drop for display across the unit. Young people are regular recipients of national and local awards, alongside good accreditation such as Arts Award, AQA units and GCSE.

Personal, social and health education sessions are held in tutorial groups. These focus on key health issues, such as sex education and sexual health and drug and alcohol misuse. Young people engage well in these sessions and enjoy opportunities to work with their peers on themes which provoke good discussion and opportunities for role play.

Vocational opportunities continue to be limited. The unit is aware of this and work is in progress to extend these facilities in the near future. In order to redress this imbalance a good range of work experience opportunities for those young people who are eligible. These include external placements at local stables, a hairdressing salon and a mechanics workshop. Sessions are planned well to help young people understand the world of work and they enjoy the range of work offered. Young people develop good practical skills specifically in art, design technology and work experience around the building, the garden and residential kitchens. As a result young people develop skills and qualifications to help them move on to employment or further training on release. All young people can achieve health and safety and food hygiene accreditation, unit awards and higher level qualifications if their length of stay is of a suitable length. Young people generally work safely in classrooms, in practical activities and on work placements. They also learn about safety within activities and how to keep safe.

Good collaboration with the residential team ensures learning is extended beyond the education day to evening, weekend and during holiday periods. A wide range of activities are also planned collaboratively for holiday periods with the professional services team which delivers citizenship and personal and social development themes. Sports activities and art projects including work with professional dancers,

artists and musicians also continue during holiday and weekend periods, with funding and staff support from the education team.

A good range of teaching aids and resources are used effectively in most lessons to enhance learning, to encourage participation and stimulate discussion. When information computer technology is used it is effective and appropriate software and learning programmes engage learners well and support their good progress. It is however not used consistently or sufficiently to achieve awards, such as functional skills in ICT. The use of interactive technology to support teaching and learning generally is underdeveloped. The library has a good range of books for reading, which are regularly updated, and some research and information about careers are also available.

Young people are provided with outstanding guidance and support during their time at the centre. Induction includes a thorough assessment of learning needs. Young people are supported through carefully selected assessments to ensure information gathered will help them start swiftly and successfully in to appropriate learning programmes. This is then used effectively to set personal learning goals. Resources for this work are very good and selected to ensure there is a range of materials and expertise on hand to identify specific learning needs. Young people with a range of ability and skills whether special educational needs, specific learning difficulties such as autism or with high academic skills and knowledge are provided with careful assessment and support to ensure they start working at the level appropriate for their ability and need. As a result young people settle into education quickly. Learning targets are negotiated, with their tutors, closely reflecting ability and current levels of achievement which are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect progress.

A strong tutorial system ensures that all young people are involved in reviewing their learning targets and in setting new and more challenging goals. Teachers make very good use of the outcomes of the initial assessments to plan learning resources that will meet individual needs. Teaching assistants provide very good support through focused one-to-one sessions and during practical activities and lessons. Literacy support is provided on a regular basis to those learners with low literacy levels and a range of techniques are skilfully utilised by teaching assistants to help improve their literacy skills.

Currently not all young people have access to independent information, advice and guidance with a careers adviser as part of their transition planning prior to leaving the centre. However, those young people whose usual residence is in the locality can and do access this support. Tutorial sessions ensure that young people receive advice about employment and training options available to them when they leave and also receive some preparation for employment through curriculum vitae work, mock interviews and job matching exercises. In some instances, the host local authority will provide support in planning for the next move to a training or college placement but this is not regular practice.

Education staff contribute fully to transition planning and on-going case work. Staff

take an active part in informing and influencing care plans, looked after children reviews and personal education plans. This helps to ensure that education plays a central role in young people's time at the centre. The quality of individual learning plans and work reports are consistently good. These provide the young person, their family, professional workers and future placements with a very clear and comprehensive assessment of work completed, current levels of performance and ability, and the range of accreditation achieved.

Leadership and management of the school are good. The shared senior management arrangement adds considerable value to the quality of work and oversight of education. Very effective arrangements for quality assuring and improving the quality of young people's experience are in place. Observation of teaching practice has been well established and learning walks and work sampling are regular activities. Teachers receive regular and structured feedback from the school improvement partner and the headteacher to support continuous improvement. Self-evaluation demonstrates an accurate analysis of the quality of teaching and learning. Data analysis and performance of young people are regularly collated and reviewed to ensure their progress is carefully monitored. This work has developed significantly since the last inspection and is outstanding.

Good supervisory arrangements through the local authority ensure that the senior managers for education are closely networked into countywide staff development initiatives and information to support teaching and learning. All staff are suitably qualified and receive opportunities for professional development and staff training, in-house and externally. Staff appraisal takes place annually for all teaching staff but supervision is infrequent. Staff meetings are held on a weekly basis and the management open door policy ensures staff can talk individually to managers when necessary.

Education space is limited but used efficiently to maximise learning opportunities. Classrooms are small, particularly mathematics and science but well maintained. The good use of display to support learning and to share young people's work particularly in English, science, art and design technology enlivens teaching areas and corridors. In some rooms, owing to shared use of space at evenings and weekends, very few practical resources and literature are readily accessible to young people during lessons. The staff room is cramped, storage facilities are poor and there is insufficient space for staff to plan work or to hold meetings.

## 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* and the evaluation schedule for the inspection of children's homes.