

Inspection report for children's home

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC036804
<b>Inspection date</b>	16/07/2013
<b>Inspector</b>	Stephen Graham
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

---

<b>Date of last inspection</b>	14/03/2013
--------------------------------	------------

---

© Crown copyright 2013

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

## Service information

### Brief description of the service

This local authority children's home provides short-break care for up to six young people with physical or learning disabilities.

### 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 overall effectiveness of the service in meeting the needs of young people living at the home is outstanding. Young people enjoy outstanding outcomes in their care and receive well organised support from the staff team to help them to achieve this. They and their parents and carers discuss their individual care needs with the staff team very regularly. They receive outstanding support with their personal health care needs. They participate regularly in a broad range of healthy leisure activities in their local community. They attend their education regularly and are supported to be successful in it.

The home is decorated and furnished to a very high standard and is very well presented. It provides a safe and comfortable environment to the young people who live there. The staff team give young people advice and support to help keep them safe. The home is very well led and managed. The management arrangements work effectively to support both the outstanding quality of care provided to young people and the outcomes they achieve during each visit to the home.

### Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **outstanding**.

Young people, their parents and carers discuss the success of their individual care plans with the staff team at the home very regularly. This helps to ensure that the outcomes agreed in their care plans are achieved. Young people interact very well with the staff team and with each other during their visits to the home. One parent described how, in their experience, young people 'are treated individually'. Another

reported that, 'my child is very comfortable with the staff there. I feel very relaxed knowing they are well cared for. Without it, my child could be in care.'

The staff team ensure that the individual achievements of each young person visiting the home are documented clearly and celebrated with them. Social care professionals linked to the home believe that improving outcomes for children is the clear priority for the staff team. One commended the 'child-centred approach' at the home. Another described how young people they work with, 'communicate their satisfaction with the service.'

Young people achieve some very good health outcomes during their visits. They benefit from the support available to them both at the home and from additional specialist health care services. Young people also enjoy a very healthy and active lifestyle during their visits. They participate regularly in a good range of healthy activities both within the local community and beyond. They also enjoy a very homely and healthy diet which takes into account their individual food preferences and any additional dietary needs. One young person described the food as one of the best things about visiting the home, adding, 'especially the trifle I had today'.

Young people visiting the home enjoy outstanding outcomes in their education. Very good links are maintained with specialist education services and local schools. These links work very effectively to help the staff team to maintain and improve educational outcomes for young people. Social care professionals linked to the home believe strongly that children's learning is supported by the care they receive from the staff team.

Young people can practise and develop their individual self-care skills during each visit to the home. The staff team provide them with very good support, facilities and practical advice to help them to achieve this. They work very closely with parents, carers and placing social workers to plan this. This helps young people who move on from the home to make a successful transition to adult care services. One parent described how their child, 'has appropriate boundaries in place for their age, they are encouraged to be independent.' Another said, 'We are more than happy with the service. It is a valuable asset to our family and also in developing our child's social skills with other adults and peers.'

## Quality of care

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

The manager and staff team closely monitor the individual care plans for each young person visiting the home. They work in close partnership with parents, carers, young people and their placing social workers to do this. This helps to ensure that the monitoring is effective and that the individual needs of each young person are fully known and addressed successfully during each visit. One parent described how, 'Children are well cared for and happy. They are treated individually and the staff team are all positive and warm.' Another said, 'Communication is outstanding from the staff to my child and to us as parents. They put the children at the centre of their

care.'

Social care professionals linked to the home believe that the staff team work well with them. They also confirmed that, in their view, improving outcomes for young people is the 'clear priority' of the manager and staff team. They describe the service provided as 'excellent'. One described how in their view, 'communication between staff and parents is crucial' and adds that in their experience of working with the home this 'is executed to a high degree'. Another said, 'I have always had good communication and contact from the home.' Another observed that 'Key workers work well with children.'

Regular meetings are organised to review the effectiveness of short-break care plans. Parents, carers and young people themselves can attend these meetings and can give their views directly to the social care professionals involved in meeting their care needs. One parent described how, 'Reviews have always been arranged by mutual agreement.' The manager and staff team members also attend the meetings and provide very good information and detailed written reports regarding the progress made by young people during their visits to the home.

There are very detailed and effective admission procedures in place. These help young people coming to visit the home to settle in quickly. The manager and staff team also complete detailed individual risk assessments in partnership with parents, carers and placing social workers. These arrangements help to ensure that young people are admitted safely. One young person described how, prior to coming to stay overnight for the first time, they were encouraged to visit as often as they would like to. One parent described how the staff team, 'Take into account the smallest details to ensure that my child has an excellent stay.' Another said, 'When leaving my child at the home, I feel like I am leaving them with my own family. I couldn't ask for anything better. The home and staff are excellent and the staff team always work to the highest standard.'

The building is furnished and equipped to a very high standard. It provides a very comfortable and safe environment for the young people who visit. One parent described the home as being 'immaculate, always spotless'. One young person described how they really enjoy using the 'Jacuzzi bath'. The location of the home provides young people with very good access to a broad range of local community facilities and recreational opportunities.

Young people enjoy a healthy diet and eat well when visiting the home. They can try different foods from a variety of cultures. The staff team are trained in first aid and the safe administration of medication. This helps to ensure that the health needs of young people are met in any emergency and that medication is administered to young people safely. The staff team work closely with parents, carers and a range of specialist health professionals linked to the home. This ensures that the individual health needs of each young person are agreed and met during every visit they make.

The staff team develop and sustain very positive and constructive relationships with the young people who come to visit the home. Young people, their parents and

carers are encouraged to give their views and to be involved in the overall running of the home. One parent described how, 'The staff are extremely approachable and take all my concerns, however small, into consideration. They are always willing to talk about my child.' Another described how the home has a, 'great, open door policy', adding that, 'We can contact the staff at any time and are encouraged to do so.' One social care professional described how the staff team, 'hold regular meetings with the children to discuss what activities they might like to participate in.' Another described how the staff team, 'arrange daily tea time meetings with young people to encourage their participation.'

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

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

The staff team at the home are committed to keeping the children in their care safe. They are trained to protect young people from any potential abuse. They use the agreed safeguarding procedures and guidance in place at the home to help achieve this. They work closely with designated child protection professionals and the local community police to maintain this. They encourage young people to understand how to protect themselves. They complete detailed care plans in partnership with parents, carers and placing social workers. Social care professionals involved in these procedures believe that the staff team understand how to protect children and how to safeguard their welfare. The agreed care plans put in place help to identify any risks and protective factors for each individual young person. They are monitored and reviewed very regularly by staff to ensure that they remain effective in helping to keep young people safe. One parent states simply stated, 'It's a safe and friendly environment.'

There are agreed procedures in place to help ensure that should young people ever go missing from the home they would be found and kept safe, as quickly as possible. The staff team are trained to use physical restraint where this is ever necessary to keep young people safe. However, the use of any physical interventions at the home has not been necessary. One parent described how, 'I understand the restraining procedure but it has never been used as my child is relaxed and enjoys the surroundings so it has never been necessary.' The staff team promote, support and celebrate the positive behaviour of the young people who visit. They use a range of agreed incentives to support this. Overall, the relationships between the staff team and young people are very positive.

The home provides a safe and comfortable environment to the young people who come to visit. The manager and staff team ensure that regular health and safety checks are completed to help minimise any potential risks to young people. The staff team know what to do in any emergency and they practice this regularly with young people.

Arrangements are in place to complete checks on new staff team members to ensure they are suitable to work with children. Young people themselves can participate in

the processes to recruit new staff. Any visitors to the home are supervised by staff to help ensure that children are kept safe when they are present.

## **Leadership and management**

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

The arrangements for the manager to monitor the quality of the service provided at the home are very effective. Regular reports are completed regarding the quality of the care that young people visiting the home receive. The manager works closely with the staff team, parents, carers and young people themselves to plan and implement further improvements to the service. One parent reported, 'I couldn't ask for anything better. The home and staff are excellent and the staff always work to the highest standard.'

Social care professionals linked to the home believe that the service provided to the children who visit is excellent. They agree that improving outcomes for children is the clear priority of the manager and staff team. There is a Statement of Purpose in place which accurately describes the services provided at the home. Young people receive their own summary guide to the service. This is very well presented and contains some good information.

The staff team overall are very experienced and qualified. They use their experience and knowledge well to provide young people with some outstanding outcomes in their care. One parent reported that the 'Staff's attitude, consistency and overall interest in my child's needs is excellent.' Additional training opportunities are planned by the manager in consultation with the staff team. The manager also ensures that the staff team receive appropriate supervision and annual appraisals. This helps the service overall to further develop and helps to maintain the knowledge and skills they need to care for young people successfully. The manager monitors the daily staffing levels at the home very regularly. This helps to ensure that young people receive the care and support they need.

Independent monitoring visits to the home are completed regularly on behalf of the registered provider. Reports are completed in good detail. The manager reviews the contents of these reports and any recommendations made. They also consult regularly with young people, parents and carers, staff, social workers and other professionals, to gather views on the effectiveness of the service and to plan further improvements to it. One parent reported, 'I don't feel anything could be improved. I always find the staff welcoming and friendly, they are a great team who work extremely hard, in all areas from management to domestic, cooks and the driver.'

There were no actions raised or recommendations made at the previous inspection visit.

## 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.