

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Maureen Hamer
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The service is provided by a local registered charity. It provides short breaks for up to five young people with learning difficulties, sensory impairment or physical 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 **good**.

Young people enjoy their time when having a short break in this caring home.

Staff listen to, and communicate with, young people and parents to gain a good understanding of the needs of young people and to ensure that their needs are well met. Parents feel that they can trust staff in this home to provide good quality care for their children and to keep them safe.

Young people are offered a range of activities inside and outside of the home to help them to enjoy their short break experience. Young people are well cared for and are kept safe.

The manager completes regular good quality assurance monitoring however young people's support plans are not regularly audited. An incident was not accurately recorded and quality assurance monitoring did not identify this error.

Areas for improvement

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
28 (2001)	maintain in respect of each who is accommodated in a children's home a record in permanent form which includes the information, documents and records specified in Schedule 3 related to that child in particular the legal status (Regulation 28 (1)(a))	04/10/2013
34 (2001)	establish and maintain a system for monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6 at appropriate in particular compliance with care or placement plan and reporting on errors in report writing (Regulation 34 (1)(a))	04/10/2013

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people with complex physical disabilities and learning difficulties develop good positive and trusting relationships with staff. Young people have enjoyable short breaks in this relaxing environment and are making good progress.

The complex medical health needs of some young people are very effectively managed. There is good partnership working between the home, parents and specialist staff such as occupational therapist and the local visual impairment team as well as young people's general practitioners and specialist medical staff. This contributes to effective and individualised support being provided to meet young people's health and social care needs.

Some young people with physical disabilities are not able to move themselves or verbally communicate their needs such as discomfort and pain. Staff respond effectively and promptly to such individualised vulnerabilities. Staff act to ensure that young people are positioned to successfully ensure comfort and reduce the risk of breaking young people's frail skin and associated complications such as infection.

Young people's communication methods are very well known to staff. Consequently frustration felt by young people is avoided or quickly resolved. Staff provide young people with choice in all aspects of their life such as in the activities that they want to do. This promotes positive relationships, promotes appropriate activities and reduces the incidence of challenging behaviour.

Young people's emotional well-being is promoted. Staff listen to young people and enable them to develop social skills that promote their confidence. This contributes to young people's enjoyment in the home and promotes positive behaviour.

Young people's nutritional needs are well understood. A varied and enjoyable diet is made available to promote positive health and weight. As a consequence of digestive problems some young people are on complex feeding regimes. Staff ensure that they are safely administered to promote young people's comfort and to provide the

necessary nutritional input to maintain well-being.

Attendance at school is good. Young people communication and life skills are successfully supported enabling young people to maximise their independence skills for example care of their personal hygiene. This promotes a consistent approach and has a positive impact on maximising social skills and independence.

There is good communication between staff and parents who are the main carers for young people. Parents report that they feel that their young people have access to enjoyable activities. Access to a range of activities such as going to the local library and shopping for personal items and learning to use self-service counters is gained. This provides young people with a broad range of experiences.

Quality of care

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

Staff are good at developing positive relationship with young people and this promotes a happy home environment. Staff communicate with young people about all aspects of their care. This maximises young people's engagement in their daily routine and prepares them for activities and events in their day.

Staff also gain young people's input about the care that they receive and the activities that they do during their short break. This positive engagement helps staff to ensure that young people are enjoying their stay and gaining skills from the activities that the home has in place.

There is good communication between the short break provision, home and school to ensure continuity of care to support social and communication skills and positive behaviours. In term times a book is used between these settings to report on elements of the young person's day. This promotes a good and consistent approach to the young people's care.

Support plans are good and reflect the needs of young people. Verbal communication between staff is of a high standard to ensure young people needs are well met. Staff report on the events that young people have engaged in on a daily basis and report their progress to appropriate partners such as parents and social workers. Team meetings provide staff with a good opportunity to discuss young people's progress and to ensure that all staff are aware of any changes in a young person's care.

Parents have confidence in staff and feel that their young people are safe and well cared for. A parent said, 'I trust the staff here, that is so important.' I know he is safe he has complex drug regime but staff are very good.' 'Staff are always welcoming. My son would not come into the home if he was not happy as soon as we arrive he has no hesitation at going in and feeling at home.'

Staff support young people to personalise their bedrooms. On arrival young people

put up posters on bedroom walls and have familiar objects such as soft toys brought in from home. Music that is familiar to the young person is used to help them to settle. This provides some physical link between the home and their family to promote a sense of homeliness and to help to reduce their anxiety when they are staying in the home.

Young people's medication regime is complex. Staff are provided with regular training to ensure that their knowledge and practice of administering medication is safe. There is a written record of all medication given to young people during their stay.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people are safe in this nurturing home environment. Staff act effectively to promote young people's welfare.

Young people's behaviour management plan is included in their support plan. The plan identifies effective actions to reduce young people's challenging behaviour. Triggers and individualised de-escalation methods are well understood by staff. Staff take effective and consistent action to avoid negative situations as a result methods of control and discipline are rarely used and challenging behaviour is effectively managed.

Risk assessments are individualised and take full account of young people's physical disabilities. For example, some young people are unable to communicate discomfort and the need for constant supervision is required to ensure that they are safe. Some young people have epilepsy and staff are aware of early signs of a seizure occurring and are able to act to ensure young people are kept comfortable and safe. Levels of staff supervision required for young people are included in their assessments to ensure that young people are safe at all times.

Staff are provided with training to ensure adherence general good hygiene, for example hand hygiene, and this is successful at managing the risk of cross infection.

This provision has recently recruited new staff to ensure that there is good supervision and care provided to young people. All staff are selected and vetted robustly to ensure that young people are cared for by suitably qualified adults.

Leadership and management

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

The management of this home is good. The manager places the needs of young people at the centre of all that the home does and promotes continual improvement.

The Statement of Purpose states the aims and objectives of the service. This enables

parents and placing authorities to understand how the service meets the needs of young people receiving short breaks. In addition there is a children's guide that provides information about the home to young people in an accessible format.

Staff feel valued and well supported. They receive regular supervision that is centred on the quality of care that they provide to young people. Staff report that training is of a good quality and enables them to reflect on and improve the care that they provide. Appraisals are completed and as part of their preparation staff are asked to undertake a self-evaluation. This positively engages staff in their performance and in the identification of their training and support needs to enable them to continue to provide good quality care to young people.

There is always well-experienced staff on duty to supervise new staff and to ensure that ensure young people are well cared for. In house training takes place on a regular basis for example care of oxygen to ensure that staff are skilled and competent to care for the complex needs of young people.

There is good monitoring of care but support plans are not fully audited to ensure that they all include up-to-date measurable targets. This reduces opportunities for the home to gain an objective view of its care and reduces objective scrutiny of care being provided to young people.

The management demonstrates a good understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses. The evaluation of quality assurance monitoring has improved and recommendations made at the last inspection have been met. There is a detailed development plan in place that identifies the service's priorities; this is monitored for progress. Improvements since the last inspection include continuing to have effective partnership working to promote young people's outcomes. One of the bathrooms has been re-equipped. The garden has been improved including having a newly planted herb area. Improvements in communication aids such as provision of Ipads also continue.

All personal records are stored securely. The majority of young people are provided with care funded via direct payments consequently the places are commissioned by parents. However as a result the legal status of young people is not readily available on young people's files. This does not impact on young people but lack of such information impedes the manager's ability to readily track the necessity for statutory reviews.

An up-to-date health and safety assessment is in place. Evacuation of the premises has been practiced during the day time. Fire prevention measures are reported by independent assessment to be good and include regular checks of equipment such as electrical wiring. All fire equipment is regularly checked and when faults are reported immediate action is taken to remedy the issue. The home has waking night staff so that there would be very early detection of any fire.

All significant events relating to young people are communicated to relevant partners.

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.