

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC059203
Inspection date	18/11/2013
Inspector	Stephen Graham
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	11/02/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home provides short breaks for six children who have a learning disability. The home is operated by the local authority.

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 from their care. The support they receive from the staff team to help them to achieve this is very well organised. Young people, supported by their parents and carers can regularly discuss their individual care needs with the staff team and manager at the home. The staff team provide young people with outstanding support in meeting their personal health care needs. They also receive outstanding support, enabling them to participate very regularly in a broad range of healthy leisure activities in their local community. Young people attend their education very regularly and are supported to be successful in it.

The building provides a safe and comfortable environment to the young people who visit. It is decorated and furnished to a good standard and is very well presented. The staff team give young people good advice and outstanding support to help keep them safe. The home is very well led and managed. The management arrangements in place work effectively to support the outstanding quality of care provided to young people by the staff team and the very positive outcomes they are able to achieve during each visit to the home.

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **outstanding**.

The manager and staff team at the home work well with parents, carers and social work professionals to achieve some outstanding outcomes with the young people

who come to visit. Young people, supported by 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 describes how in their experience, the staff team, 'Value young people as individuals.' Another describes how, 'The level of support they provide both to my child and to us as a family is amazing, they are an outstanding service.'

Young people enjoy outstanding health outcomes during their visits to the home. They benefit from the very well planned support made available to them throughout each stay. They also enjoy a very healthy and active lifestyle during each visit. They participate in a very 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.

Young people visiting the home enjoy very good outcomes in their education. The manager and staff team maintain very good links with specialist education services and local schools and work in very close partnership with parents and carers to maintain this. 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 that children's learning is supported by the care they receive from the staff team. Parents and carers strongly agree that young people are helped with their school work and that they can also follow the out of school activities that they are interested in. One parent describes how in their experience, 'The choices young people indicate to them are important to staff. They provide new experiences for young people to try.'

Young people practise and develop their individual self-care skills during each visit to the home. The staff team provide them with outstanding support and practical advice to help them to achieve this. They work very closely with parents, carers and placing social workers to plan this effectively. This supports young people who move on from the home to make a successful transition to adult care services. One parent describes how in their experience, 'They provide a really inclusive programme for my child who is encouraged and supported to be as independent as they can be.'

Quality of care

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

The support and care provided to young people visiting the service 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 effectively. This ensures 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 describes how in their experience, 'The flexibility of staff is second to none. I can speak to them as I need to they always have time to listen.'

Social care professionals linked to the home believe that the staff team work well with them. They believe that the service provided by the home is 'excellent'. They also strongly agree that improving outcomes for young people is the 'clear priority' of the manager and staff team. One describes that, 'I have strong links to all staff and the manager, we have a good relationship. They are pro-active in maintaining good contact with me.' Another describes how, 'I have worked with the service for a number of years it goes from strength to strength.'

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 strongly believe that improving outcomes for children is the clear priority for the staff team. One commends the approach of the home in working in a way which is 'inclusive' of the views and beliefs of young people, their parents and carers.

Regular meetings are organised to review the effectiveness of short break care plans. The manager and staff team members 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. Parents, carers and young people themselves are also encouraged and supported to attend these meetings. This allows them to give their own views directly to the social care professionals involved in meeting their care needs.

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. The building is furnished and equipped to a high standard. It provides a very comfortable and safe environment for the young people who visit. 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 choose the food they would like to eat and they can try different foods from a variety of cultures. The staff team work closely with parents, carers and placing social workers to ensure that the individual health needs of each young person are known and agreed and that these can be met during each visit they make to the home. The staff team are also 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.

Young people, their parents and carers are strongly encouraged to give their views and to be involved in the overall running of the home. The manager maintains clear records to demonstrate how the ideas and suggestions received, are considered and incorporated into overall care arrangements at the home. These arrangements also work effectively in helping the staff team to develop and sustain very positive and constructive relationships with the young people who come to visit the home, as well

as their parents and carers.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

There are outstanding arrangements to safeguard the young people who visit the home and to ensure that they are cared for safely. The staff team are trained to protect young people from any potential abuse and are committed to keeping them safe during every visit they make to the home. The manager and staff team have access to agreed safeguarding procedures and guidance should they need this. They work closely with designated child protection professionals and local community police to review and maintain these arrangements. They actively encourage young people to understand how they can protect themselves.

Social care professionals linked to the home believe that the staff team understand how to protect children and how to safeguard their welfare. They agree strongly that staff help children to understand how to protect themselves. Detailed short break care plans are completed in partnership with young people, parents, carers and placing social workers. The plans put in place for each young person help to identify any individual risks to them and any protective factors required. These are monitored and reviewed very regularly by the manager and staff team in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that they remain effective in helping to keep young people safe. Parents strongly agree that the safety of their children is given a high priority by the manager and staff team at the home.

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 manager and staff team promote, support and celebrate the positive behaviour of the young people who visit. They do this in close partnership with their parents and carers. Overall, the relationships between the staff team and the young people who visit are very positive.

The home provides a very safe and comfortable environment for young people to enjoy. 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 and sensitively with young people. Arrangements are in place to complete checks on new staff team members to ensure they are suitable to work with children. 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 managers to monitor and further improve the quality of the

service provided at the home are outstanding. Regular reports are completed regarding the quality of the care that young people visiting the home receive. The manager at the home works closely with the staff team, parents, carers and young people themselves to plan and implement further improvements to the service. Social care professionals linked to the home believe that the service received by the children who visit is excellent and 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 how the service is provided. Young people receive their own summary guide to the service. This is very well presented and contains some very good information.

The staff team overall are very experienced and well qualified. They use their experience and knowledge to help provide young people with some outstanding outcomes in their care. Parents and carers strongly agree that staff keep them informed about how their children are doing during their visits to the home. 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 appraisal. This helps the service overall to both maintain and to further develop the knowledge and skills needed to care for young people successfully. The manager monitors the daily staffing levels at the home very regularly. The staffing arrangements at the home help to ensure that young people receive the care and support that they need.

Independent monitoring visits to the home are completed regularly on behalf of the registered provider. Reports from these visits are completed in very good detail. The registered provider and the manager at the home review the contents of these reports and any recommendations arising from them. The manager also consults very regularly with young people, parents and carers, staff, social workers and other professionals. The views gathered are used to help judge the effectiveness of the service being provided, as well as helping plan further improvements to it.

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.