

## Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspector</b>	Susan Southey
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<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

This children's home is owned by a small private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

### 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 **adequate**.

The Registered Manager provides strong leadership at this home. Staff are provided with effective supervision and training opportunities to support their role. This proves effective as staff provide competent care to young people. The care provision is supported by with high quality care plans that are reviewed and updated regularly.

Young people make appropriate progress in education. They attend school regularly and progress well from their starting point. Managers support young people to complete homework to promote their academic success.

Young people say they feel safe in the home although they occasionally engage in risk taking behaviours. Staff show awareness of young people's vulnerabilities and consistently take action to reduce incidents, with the support of the in-house psychologist.

Young people have their health needs met well and are encouraged to eat healthy diets and attend routine medical appointments regularly.

Staff demonstrate appropriate knowledge of child protection procedures. They are aware of the missing from home procedures which are implemented in the home. However, incorrect categorisation in some reports has caused confusion. Nevertheless, staff do promote the safe return of young people when they go missing. Therefore, this breach in regulations does not influence the safeguarding of young people when they are absent from the home

Prior to admission risk and matching assessments are completed, and planning meetings take place prior to young people's placement at the home. This practice is generally successful although recently information given to the provider has been inaccurate. This has resulted in young people whose needs cannot be met safely being placed at the home. This has on occasion led to breakdown of placements. However, admission processes are reasonably robust and managers were unaware that the information was not factually correct.

## 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
16 (2001)	ensure the registered person shall implement a procedure to be followed when any child accommodated in the home is absent without permission, which has regard to any relevant local authority or police protocols on missing children. (Regulation (16)(4)(b))	20/12/2013

### Recommendations

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

- ensure the children's home only provides admissions to children whose assessed needs they can reasonably expect to meet. (NMS 11.2)

### Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **adequate**.

Young people have regular contact with family members to promote their sense of belonging. Some visits require supervision and travel arrangements, which staff provide. Young people spend time with parents, siblings and those that are important to them. This regular contact supports young people to develop an understanding of their background.

Young people, who experience significant difficulties in social situations, make progress. They have opportunities to improve their involvement in the community. Young people generally take advantage of a variety of activities that assist their social development. These include local clubs for example sea cadets and drama

groups. This demonstrates that young people improve their social skills and reduce their social isolation.

Young people make steady progress, learning skills that support successful moves to independence. All young people have acquired culinary skills and are able to prepare and cook healthy meals. They undertake domestic chores and manage their laundry. Young people approaching adulthood are responsible for their own budgets; they have an allowance, which they manage with staff support. This demonstrates, young people have a fair knowledge of the life skills needed for when they live independently.

Young people in statutory education demonstrate their commitment to achieving academically. They attend regularly and make steady progress. Young people prepare for exams and are predicted positive grades. They attend after school activities and understand the importance of completing homework. Young people who have completed statutory education enrol on vocational college courses. This demonstrates that young people at this home are suitably motivated to do well in education and training.

## **Quality of care**

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

Young people are well cared for by a committed staff team who provide effective care. Care plans are of an exceptional quality and provide clear guidance on how to meet young people's individual needs. Young people's involvement in these plans is significant. Their participation in the care planning process is evident as their comments are recorded throughout the plans. Staff monitor the plans monthly and the placing authority approves any changes. This promotes joint working and continuity of care for young people. It also demonstrates that staff consider young people's views important in the care planning process.

Managers undertake assessments when placing authorities make referrals. They use historical information provided, to make judgements on the suitability of the young person for placement. Managers analyse the data and decide if they can safely meet young people's needs. Risk and matching assessments are completed, and planning meetings take place prior to young people's placement at the home. This practice is generally successful although recently information given to the provider has been inaccurate. This has resulted in young people whose needs cannot be met safely being placed at the home. This has led to breakdown of placements. However, admission processes are reasonably robust and managers were unaware that the information was not factually correct. Generally admission procedures promote appropriate assessment of young people when they are referred for placements.

Young people build positive relationships with staff and interact with them well. They also have reasonably good engagement with each other. Young people are able to resolve conflicts, expected as part of everyday group living, effectively. Over time they present with improved behaviour. They achieve this by discussing issues at

regular resident's meetings and one-to-one key worker sessions. This proves successful as young people say they enjoy living at the home and report they generally get on with everyone.

Young people say they know how to make complaints and have made them. They say they are satisfied with the outcomes. The Registered Manager takes concerns from young people seriously and conducts investigations in line with the home's policies and procedures. This demonstrates that the home deals efficiently with complaints raised by young people.

Young people have their views sought regularly at this home. Key worker sessions and resident's meetings take place regularly. These forums provide opportunities for young people to make comments and requests. Young people's opinions are valued and their wishes are granted where possible. For example, young people chose the carpeting in the hallway and selected paint colours for communal rooms in the home. This demonstrates they make contributions to the home. Furthermore, young people have been taken to America on holiday; following their requests. This shows that staff consider that young people's desires are important.

Young people enjoy good health and attend regular routine medical appointments. Staff encourage young people to eat healthy and varied diets and assist them to cook nutritious meals with fresh products. This supports young people to adopt healthy lifestyles. Young people have access to a psychologist, commissioned by the organisation. Therefore, young people receive support that promotes good psychical and emotional health.

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

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

Young people say they feel safe at the home and staff demonstrate appropriate knowledge of child protection procedures. Young people who present with self-harming behaviours gain support from staff to support their safety. This is provided through regular one-to one-key worker sessions and resident's meetings. Young people trust the staff and are able to discuss solutions to behaviours that place them at risk.

Staff say they work well together and they demonstrate they consistently apply behaviour management strategies to promote positive behaviour. Staff are supported to execute behaviour management plans with regular input from the psychologist. Staff use effective communication in conjunction with sanctions and positive rewards to support good behaviour. The strategies appear to be working, as physical interventions are extremely rare in this home.

Young people who go missing from the home are kept safe by staff. They follow young people and encourage them to return to the home. When they come back, one-to-one interviews take place. These provide young people with opportunities to explain why they left. They also explore strategies with staff to prevent re-

occurrences. The home has the local police protocol in place to support staff to follow the correct procedures. However, the protocol is not consistently adhered to when reporting young people missing. Staff have categorised some young people as absconders instead of missing from home. This has caused confusion when staff have wrongly categorised the absences to police. The police have now clarified the correct categorisations and staff are aware of the errors. This breaches regulations but has minimal impact on the safety of young people.

Staff assist young people to stay safe in the home with their participation in regular fire drills. Staff regularly check safety equipment to promote the safety of young people should an emergency take place. There is an emergency evacuation plan in place to support the safe evacuation of young people.

Staff recruitment processes meet requirements to promote the safety of young people. All applicants are vetted prior to their commencement of employment. Robust selection processes for all applicants promote the safety of young people.

## **Leadership and management**

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

The Registered Manager is enthusiastic and demonstrates commitment to making improvements. She recognises the strengths and weaknesses of the home and has development plans in place. When issues of concern are raised, internal investigations take place. The Registered Manager and directors analyse their findings and consider changes to address the shortfalls. This demonstrates the manager's ability and desire to make continued improvements that enhance the service provision.

Regular monitoring takes place in the home. In addition to monthly independent visitor inspections, the Registered Manager undertakes regular internal monitoring of the home to identify shortfalls. The manager acts promptly to address issues raised through these inspections to enhance the service. Furthermore, quality assurance surveys sent to social workers and reviewing officers give positive feedback. They say that staff have a friendly approach and it is refreshing attending meetings there. This indicates positive relationships with other professionals.

Staff say they are well supported by the Registered Manager. They have annual appraisals where targets are set to promote their on-going development. Staff receive formal supervision monthly in addition to peer supervision. The Registered Manager also identifies when staff may need additional guidance. This is provided through informal supervisions. This demonstrates that staff receive regular support to assist them in their role.

Staff provide good quality care for young people and receive on-going training to support their development. Most staff have completed the level 3 Diploma to further enhance their skill base. Staff who have yet to gain this qualification are still undertaking induction training. All staff have regular on-going training to assist them

to retain skills and keep up to date with new developments.



## 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.