

## Inspection report for children's home

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC035352
<b>Inspection date</b>	09/01/2014
<b>Inspector</b>	Katarina Djordjevic
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

---

<b>Date of last inspection</b>	03/12/2012
--------------------------------	------------

---

© Crown copyright 2014

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

The home can accommodate up to eight young people with emotional and/or behaviour difficulties. The home is run 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 **good**.

This is a good home where young people receive a very good standard of individualised care and they make significant progress given their starting points. This has helped them to become safer and their opportunities to achieve their full potential have greatly increased. This is because they are cared for by a committed staff team who have high hopes and aspirations for all young people. Comments received from parents, carers and a range of professionals confirm that young people really benefit from living at the home and make significant progress.

Empowerment of young people, which includes promoting their independence, is embedded in the culture of the home. Staff are good communicators with key stakeholders and feedback during this inspection has confirmed this. Young people who spoke with the inspector all said they feel safe at the home and spoke highly of the staff and the care and support they receive. Young people spoke confidently about their experiences at the home and it was clear that they have very open and respectful relationships with staff. Young people really appreciate the support they have received and all demonstrated a positive attitude about their futures.

There is a real commitment from the whole staff team to continually improve services provided. There have been many improvements since the last inspection regarding: the premises; the promotion of independence training; quality assurance systems and staff training.

The judgement of good is made although there are many outstanding features of the home. This is because two requirements have been made regarding the recording of medication and the wedging open of doors. Although there is no evidence that these

shortfalls have impacted on young people, they do have the potential to affect the health and wellbeing of young people.

## 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
21 (2001)	make suitable arrangements for the recording, handling, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of any medicines received into the children's home (Regulation 21 (1))	28/02/2014
32 (2001)	take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment. This is with particular reference to not wedging doors open. (Regulation 32 (1) (a))	31/01/2014

### Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **outstanding**.

Young people become more resilient and are able to face some of the challenges of growing up with the confidence and skills they have acquired since living at the home. This is because they receive nurturing, individualised care and guidance from staff. Their self-esteem becomes more positive as they are not judged or criticised when they make mistakes but they are praised for all their efforts and achievements. They have opportunities they may not have had before. Feedback received from professionals confirms that young people have become more confident since moving into the home. One social worker commented that 'Welford House has been a very supportive placement.'

Young people's confidence is further enhanced as they are at the centre of decision making at the home and about their futures. They feel listened to and really feel valued and as a result they are well-motivated to improve the quality of their lives. Some young people have delivered 'Total Respect' training to a range of professionals and local authority councillors. This has helped to build up their self-confidence and self-worth tremendously. One social worker said that staff had done 'an incredible job' with the young person who is now very confident at putting their views across.

Young people make very good progress in education, training and employment. This is because they receive individualised education and training tailored around their needs, skills and interests. Their attendance is very good and where young people

are not currently in school, they engage very well in their alternative educational provisions. As a result, young people are making positive choices about their futures with regard to education, training and employment. This is because they have become well motivated and realise they can have high aspirations and are able to start planning for their futures. Young people who have left school are in full-time employment and some young people who are still in full-time education have part-time jobs.

Young people gain a sense of belonging to the local and wider community as they are encouraged to engage in voluntary work. For example, some young people work in charity shops at the weekends.

Young people's self-esteem also increases as they are able to pursue their hobbies and interests. Their skills and individual talents are recognised and they are given excellent support and encouragement by staff to engage in local and national competitions and further develop their skills. For example, a young person has been enrolled on a first aid course which will enable them to commence a course for them to become a coach/trainer. Additionally, this enables young people to have high aspirations for their future.

Young people make very good progress in preparing for independence during their time at the home. They embark on independence programmes which are based on their individual needs and experiences. These programmes range from learning to cook and doing their own laundry to managing a weekly budget. Young people enjoy learning different skills and taking responsibility for managing their budgets. Some young people have their own budgets to manage which are based on a realistic amount that they will have when they leave care and move into independent living. For some young people who live in the semi-independent flat they have a realistic experience of what it is like to live independently. Young people are also supported to participate in courses such as basic food safety.

## Quality of care

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

Young people receive a very good standard of individualised care which takes into account their starting points, previous histories, experiences and identified risks. This is possible as placement plans, risk assessments and associated care records are detailed; informing staff how to work with young people. Placement plans and risk assessments are reviewed regularly and updated as required. This ensures young people receive care based on their current identified needs and risks. Furthermore, excellent working partnerships, including communication with placing authorities, other professionals and parents or carers, ensure young people's individual needs are met. Monthly chronologies are sent to social workers which enables them to monitor that young people's current needs are being met. Social workers and other professionals confirm that communication with staff at the home is very good.

The empowerment of young people is embedded in the day-to-day practice. This is

because staff truly understand and respect the rights of young people to be at the centre of decision-making about all aspects of their daily and future lives. Some young people play a key role in the Children in Care Council and the Children's Right's service.

The promotion of education, training and employment is embedded in the day-to-day practice within the home. As a result, young people adopt this view and are very well-motivated to achieve their full potential academically and socially. Staff are totally committed to ensuring young people receive education, training and employment based on their individual needs. The management team meet regularly with the local authority's virtual school co-ordinator. This gives the opportunity to discuss young people's progress and helps to resolve any difficulties young people may be experiencing. This is a key forum for the management team to advocate on young people's behalf to ensure they are receiving appropriate education. As a result, young people's attendance at their educational provisions is very good. They are making good progress in their chosen subjects and are praised and rewarded for their achievements. Young people have learned to produce curriculum vitae and have successfully gained full-time and part-time jobs. Young people are very proud of their achievements.

The promotion of healthy living is seen as important in the home. Young people are actively encouraged to take responsibility for their health in preparation for independent living. They are proactively supported to access a range of routine and specialist health services which helps to ensure young people's physical, emotional, psychological and dietary needs are met. Staff encourage young people to access health advisory services and use key work sessions and young people's meetings for promoting health issues.

Young people receive excellent practical and emotional support through which they maintain contact and develop relationships with their families and friends where appropriate.

Young people live in a home which is decorated, furnished and maintained to a good standard. The home has undergone major refurbishment since the last inspection. This has included making the facilities available more conducive for preparing young people for independent living. For example, the Registered Manager's office has been converted to an additional kitchen which is used solely for young people on independence programmes where they have their own food budgets and make their own meals. The kitchen in the independence flat has also been refurbished to ensure it is suitable for young people on a semi-independent living programme. Young people are involved in choosing the decor and making it 'their home'. Each young person is actively encouraged to personalise their bedroom.

## **Safeguarding children and young people**

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

Young people feel safe living at the home. They make good progress in preparing for adulthood which includes learning how to change their risk-taking behaviours and becoming accepted members of the wider community. This is because young people live in a nurturing environment where they are able to develop skills and take controlled risks in preparation for adulthood. This can be attributed to the skills and commitment of the staff team who effectively implement a range of safeguarding policies and procedures. Staff are clear about their responsibilities in reporting any child protection concerns. Close working and regular communication with placing authorities and other professionals also help to monitor the care and safety provided to young people.

Staffing levels and the existence of open and trusting relationships between staff and young people further protect and promote young people's well-being. Young people know how to use the complaints' procedure. When young people have made complaints, these have been dealt with promptly and appropriately. This also makes young people feel listened to and valued.

The management of behaviour is good and young people's behaviour improves significantly given their starting points. This is because staff present as positive role models, talk openly and honestly with young people and set clear boundaries about what is expected. The emphasis is on recognising and rewarding positive behaviour. Achievements are always recognised and praised and rewarded where appropriate. This helps to improve young people's self-esteem. Restraint is rarely used which is testament to the skills of the staff team. Records are kept as required. The Registered Manager monitors behaviour management records which ensures young people's behaviour is managed safely and appropriately. This monitoring also ensure young people's achievements and progress are celebrated.

Staff effectively implement procedures relating to young people going missing; they work very closely with other professionals including the police. Comments received from the police demonstrate that staff work successfully with young people in this area and as a result young people make good progress in changing their risk-taking behaviours. The numbers of incidents of them going missing has reduced. Consequently, young people's safety improves.

The management of health and safety helps to protect young people and staff from the risk of harm and injury. This is because: all staff take responsibility for the day-to-day management of health and safety; servicing of installations and equipment takes place as required; and regular fire safety testing and fire drills take place. Young people know the fire safety procedures and are taught about general health and safety practices as part of their preparation for adult life. However, during the inspection it was noticed that a number of doors were wedged open including in the semi-independence flat. This potentially places young people and staff at risk.

A recent audit of the management of medication by the management team identified

some shortfalls which have been dealt with promptly and effectively. However, during this inspection a review of medication records identified some errors in the recording of information. Although there is no evidence of young people being affected by this, this does have the potential to affect young people's health and well-being.

No new staff have been employed since the last inspection. However, discussions with the Registered Manager identified that appropriate checks are carried out for new employees. Additionally, visitor's identities are checked and copies of regular contract workers' identification cards are kept. These recruitment and vetting checks help to ensure young people are protected from the risk of harm and abuse.

## **Leadership and management**

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

The home has a clear Statement of Purpose which informs young people, parents and placing authorities of services provided. Practice at the home is in line with the Statement of Purpose. Young people confirmed that they are given a copy of the children's guide on admission which gives clear details of the rules, routines and what they can expect.

Young people receive an excellent level of individualised care and make significant progress during their time at the home. Feedback from professionals also supports this. This can be attributed to the unquestionable commitment of the staff team who have high aspirations for young people and constantly strive to improve their quality of life.

The home has a development plan which is based on the five Every Child Matters outcomes. This sets out clear targets for the year and demonstrates a commitment to continual improvement. It is reviewed by the Registered Manager.

The management team provide clear leadership and direction and staff are well supported. The whole staff team are committed to ensuring young people reach their full potential. However, the judgement made for this outcome has been affected by the management team failing to identify the potential risks posed by wedging open doors and errors in medication practices.

Staff said they work well as a team; weekly staff meetings are held and they receive regular supervision. Training is seen as important and in addition to mandatory training further training based on the needs of young people and staff is provided. The management team have introduced training for all staff on the social pedagogy model of care and support. This training is ongoing and supports the ethos of the home in placing the young person at the centre of their care.

The whole staff team take responsibility for the monitoring of systems and practices in the home and demonstrate a commitment to improving the lives of young people.



The Registered Manager routinely reads and signs a range of records and where shortfalls are identified, these are communicated promptly to staff to rectify. Since the last inspection the Registered Manager sends out monthly questionnaires to a range of professionals to obtain their views and suggestions. Evidence shows from this inspection that where issues are raised both positive and negative, these are addressed promptly. This ensures that young people's care is appropriate and the comments inform future practice and developments. Questionnaires are also sent to young people's parents and carers which also help the management team to monitor practice and helps to keep young people from the risk of harm. Monthly monitoring visits are also carried out by an independent person and copies of these reports are sent to Ofsted as required.

There is a clear system in place to notify appropriate authorities of all significant events relating to the protection of young people living at the home. This helps to further promote young people's well-being and protect them from harm.

## 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.