

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC036804
<b>Inspector</b>	Bill Drumm
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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<b>Registered person</b>	Gateshead Council
<b>Registered person address</b>	Civic Centre Regent Street GATESHEAD Tyne and Wear NE8 1HH
<b>Responsible individual</b>	Frances Powell
<b>Registered manager</b>	Susan Ann Poad
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	17/10/2013

<b>Inspection date</b>	10/06/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>outstanding</b>
Outcomes for children and young people	outstanding
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	outstanding
Leadership and management	outstanding

## Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	<b>outstanding</b>
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The home provides an excellent, well organised and very effective short break service to young people with disabilities. Each young person has a detailed care plan which incorporates individualised day and night-time routines. This helps to ensure they receive a personalised service and are kept safe from harm.

Staff are committed, skilled and competent to meet the diverse needs of the young people in their care including those from ethnically diverse backgrounds. Keyworkers have a thorough and detailed knowledge of the young people they look after and have built excellent working relationships with their families, education providers and health care staff. Staff receive regular training to ensure their skills are kept up to date. Staff are committed to ensuring young people have positive life experiences whilst staying at the home and are enabled to learn new skills, develop their confidence and improve their self-esteem.

All young people have made good progress. Their achievements, no matter how small, are celebrated. Staff recognise the importance of encouraging young people to achieve their maximum potential. For some, this has resulted in plans for them to continue into further education.

Monitoring processes are thorough and appropriate. This demonstrates that the

home, its staff and senior management have a clear commitment to continued improvement.

No areas for improvement have been identified as a result of this inspection.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

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

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/10/2013	Interim	good progress
16/07/2013	Full	outstanding
14/03/2013	Interim	good progress
26/09/2012	Full	good

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for children and young people **outstanding**

Staff speak to the carers of young people prior to every stay. The purpose of the call is to ensure that any changing needs of the young people are understood, to ensure that carers always feel listened to and to highlight the progress young people make in individual aspects of their lives. This partnership working helps to ensure that each young person's care plan reflects their desired outcomes and that all people involved in their care are working towards the same goal. Young people are able to build on existing friendships and to make new ones. The parent of one young person said, 'The home offers our son a fabulous stay. He enjoys his time with the staff and with the other children.'

All success, no matter how small, is openly celebrated in the home. Certificates are awarded for displaying a good attitude, for participating in themed evenings that celebrate other nationalities and cultures and to reward achievements at school. Staff speak of enabling young people to achieve through doing and by offering on-going encouragement. One staff member said, 'We all want the young people to do well, to improve and to learn to do as much as they possibly can for themselves. One young person has learned to feed themselves using cutlery. It was great to see.'

Young people achieve some excellent health outcomes during their visits. All young people enjoy a well-balanced, healthy diet whilst living at the home including those who require specially prepared food for cultural reasons. Dietary advice and oversight is sought from a community dietician who helps to ensure that all meals remain well-balanced and nourishing. Young people with specialist feeding needs, for instance gastrostomies, are also fully catered for and advice on feeding techniques is provided by health care staff. Young people are supported and encouraged to enjoy an active lifestyle during their visits. For some young people this is the only opportunity they get to play safely in a garden.

The excellent working relationships staff have built with local education providers helps to ensure that young people enjoy outstanding outcomes in their education. This effective partnership working helps to ensure the seamless transfer of information from the school to the home and onto carers which in turn promotes continuous learning. Where they are able, young people are encouraged to further their education by attending college and to aspire to go to university. Staff help and support this by assisting young people to visit different colleges and to determine what resources are available to them once there. Partnership working in this manner helps young people to achieve their maximum potential.

Young people who live at the home are able to learn activities for daily living, self-help skills and to be more independent. The home has a separate unit where, for the first time, some young people can participate in activities for daily living. Staff work

closely with parents, carers and young people themselves to plan what activities they would like to participate in and what skills they would like to learn. This helps to equip young people with the life-skills they need to make a successful transition into adulthood and, where possible, independent living.

## **Quality of care**

## **outstanding**

The needs of young people are thoroughly and comprehensively assessed prior to them accessing this service, and they all have clear health care plans in place. Health care plans include details about any specific conditions young people may have as well as their often, very complex health care needs. Staff at the home contacts the parents and carers of young people before each of their visits to the home. The purpose of this call is to gather up-to-date health care information before the young person arrives. This means that staff are fully aware of any changing needs or conditions and are able to ensure the young person's health needs can be adequately met.

Staff are trained and competent in the handling and administration of medication. Regular audits are carried out of the administration records and decisive action is taken to address any short comings. Furthermore, staff are able to call on the expertise of health care professionals for advice and guidance where necessary. This helps to ensure that risks to young people are minimised and that their health care needs are met.

All staff spoken to have high expectations and aspirations for the young people in their care. Ongoing encouragement and support helps young people to make continued progress in developing personal care skills, daily living skills and social skills. Examples include learning to make their own bed, ensuring their teeth are properly cleaned and participating in the home's young people's forum. Each young person has a behaviour management strategy in place. This helps them to learn socially acceptable behaviour and to build positive relationships with those around them. The parent of one young person said, 'The home enables my son to experience being cared for by other people, this helps to promote his self-confidence, maturity and independence.'

Staff engage young people as far as possible in their own care by using a range of communication aids, by offering ongoing support and through patience. The parent of one young person said, 'The staff are wonderful they never seem to get tired. I know they want my child to do as much as they can for themselves.' Regular team meetings, individual supervision sessions and informal discussions amongst the staff team helps to ensure staff consistently deliver high quality care. Young people have detailed care plans and risk assessments in place which outline what their care needs are and how any risks can be minimised. Staffing levels within the home are consistently high. This also helps to ensure young people are kept safe from harm.

Staff strongly advocate for the needs of all the young people in their care who are supported and enabled to make individual choices about their lives and their futures. Several young people are nearing adulthood and are considering moving into further education or adult services. Staff at the home have been a valuable resource to parents and social workers in developing plans for the future. Staff are fully aware of the progress being made in relation to each individual young person moving on from the home.

### **Keeping children and young people safe**    **outstanding**

All relevant health and safety checks are up-to-date and certificates are in place which helps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the young people, visitors to the home and staff. Young people who access this service have a combination of medical health needs, specific conditions or some challenging behaviour. Staffing levels within the home help to ensure young people are kept safe and that they do not go missing from the home.

Each young person has a positive behaviour plan in place and they are encouraged to develop socially acceptable behaviour. The parent of one young person said, 'My son really loves the home. Going there helps him with his skills and confidence he'd be lost without the service.' Behaviour plans are reviewed frequently. Keyworkers at the home are in regular contact with parents and carers to discuss changing needs and any amendments or additions are quickly made. Regular contact and dialogue between staff, parents and other professionals helps to ensure young people are able to progress and achieve their full potential.

Sanctions are rarely, if ever, used within the home to help young people modify their behaviour. Staff offer continued support, encouragement and praise to promote and reinforce positive behaviour. Restraint or holding young people is only used to prevent them from causing harm to themselves and high staffing ratios and the skilled use of diversion techniques helps to ensure that restraint is seldom used. This means young people are able to develop positive behaviour and are kept safe in a warm, nurturing environment.

All staff are trained in safeguarding and child protection procedures. They are fully aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and know the procedures to follow if they suspect abuse may be taking place. Safe working practices ensure that young people are effectively safeguarded.

The home's complaints procedures are available to parents and young people in a range of different formats to aid understanding. There have been two complaints from parents since the last inspection. The home's manager has taken swift and decisive action to ensure that the complaints were investigated thoroughly and that the parents who made the complaints were satisfied with the outcome. This helps parents to feel listened to and to understand that all complaints will be dealt with

appropriately. This in turn helps them to feel confident about the care their children receive.

There have been no new appointments at the home since the last inspection. The home's recruitment and selection processes are robust and well established, to help ensure young people are kept safe from harm.

## **Leadership and management**

**outstanding**

The Registered Manager has been registered since November 2006. She has the appropriate qualifications to be a Registered Manager of a children's home as well as holding a suitable management qualification.

The home is successfully managed by a qualified and child-focused manager who is committed to the continual improvement of the staff team, the home and the care provided to vulnerable young people. This means that the home runs efficiently and provides high quality care for young people. A parent of one young person said, 'I have nothing negative to say about the home, the staff there are great.' Monitoring practices ensure that the manager is fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and this, in turn, informs the home's development plan.

Staff have access to excellent training opportunities, including refresher training and professional development. Additionally, each member of staff receives regular supervision. This helps to further support their development and provides them with an opportunity to share any concerns they have about working practices or the care needs of young people. The parent of one young person said, 'The home is fantastic and the staff are brilliant.' Young people are cared for by suitably skilled, qualified and supported staff team.

Young people receive care from staff who have the knowledge, skills and resources to meet their often complex health care needs. For example, specialist nurses provide staff with training in how to care for children with autistic spectrum disorders, epilepsy and gastrostomies. The parent of one young person said, 'I can't thank the staff enough for their continued support. It makes a big difference in my daughter's life as well as mine.'

There is a clear Statement of Purpose in place which provides a clear and accurate reflection of the home. Placing social workers know about the aims and objectives of the home and the services and facilities it provides.

The care needs of young people are frequently reviewed through staff meetings, individual supervision sessions and the formal statutory review processes. Staff understand what the agreed actions are for individual young people.



## What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
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.

## Information 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 framework of inspection for children's homes.

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