

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC046524
<b>Inspector</b>	Paul Taylor
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Secure Unit

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<b>Registered person</b>	Sheffield City Council
<b>Registered person address</b>	Sheffield City Council, Town Hall Pinstone Street SHEFFIELD S1 2HH
<b>Responsible individual</b>	Jayne Louise Ludlam
<b>Registered manager</b>	POST VACANT / Kieran Ian Hill
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	11/02/2014

<b>Inspection date</b>	01/07/2014
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Previous inspection	satisfactory progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>good</b>
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good
Outcomes in education and related learning activities	good

## Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	<b>good</b>
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This was an unannounced, full inspection of both the residential and education provision of this home. Young people receive bespoke care packages which support them to make significant progress, especially when bearing in mind their starting points at the time of their admission. Young people feel safe living in the home and effective systems ensure that key areas, such as restraint and child protection concerns are scrutinised closely. Bullying behaviour is effectively challenged and as a result is rare.

There are strong links with members of the safeguarding board and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and this ensures that external monitoring and transparent practice is in place.

Young people speak positively about the relationships they have with members of staff. This encourages them to engage with meaningful work about risk taking and offending behaviours. This in turn helps them to develop their resilience, responsibility and ability to reflect on their lives and choices.

The value of education is embedded in the routine and culture of the home. This enables young people to make good progress in this area. The teaching provision is well led and progress has been made since the last inspection. Recommendations made as a result of the inspection of this provision relate to developing the vocational program, continued use of information learning technology to enhance learning and ensuring the correcting of spellings, grammar and punctuation in written work is consistently good.

Young people's health needs are very well met. In particular, their emotional health and wellbeing is promoted and nurtured to a very high standard.

The home is well led. An acting manager is in place and he has plans to develop the service as well as to consolidate good practice already established. The staff team is committed to providing good standards of care. A varied training program ensures they have the skills and competencies to carry out their tasks and offer good levels of support to the young people.

One requirement has been made as a result of this inspection. This relates to ensuring that the views of young people, their parents and placing authorities are consistently gathered when the manager reviews care provision in Regulation 34 checks.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This secure children's home is operated by a local authority and is approved by the Secretary of State to restrict young people's liberty. Education is provided on site.

The children's home can accommodate up to eight young people, who are aged between 10 and 17 years. Admission of any young person over the age of 10 but under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/02/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
03/10/2013	Full	good
22/01/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
26/07/2012	Full	good

### What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

#### 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
34 (2001)	ensure reports produced following the internal monitoring of the home, contain the evidence that reflects the consultation taking place with young people, their parents and placing authority. (Regulation 34 (3))	29/08/2014

#### Recommendations

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

- ensure children have a home which promotes a learning environment and supports their development; specifically develop the vocational provision to provide more variety and range. (NMS 8.1)
- ensure children have a home which promotes a learning environment and supports their development; specifically continue the use of information learn technology to enhance learning (NMS 8.1)
- ensure children have a home which promotes a learning environment and supports their development; specifically ensure that the correcting of spelling, grammar and punctuation in young people's work is consistently good (NMS 8.1)

## Inspection judgements

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

Young people achieve positive outcomes during their time at the home. Education arrangements are of a good standard. Consequently, young people are able to overcome often engrained resistance to school and begin to enjoy learning. Because young people leave the home with an improved attitude towards education, they have the opportunity to achieve success in community education settings.

Health outcomes are very strong. The period of stability provided by placement in the home is used very effectively to assess needs and provide bespoke packages of health care to each young person. Young people have improved emotional, physical and mental health as a result of their time in the home. Specialist staff are skilled at removing stigma from emotional and mental health issues. As a result, young people engage well with agreed programmes. In some cases young people return to the home following discharge to continue their sessions with health care professionals. This reflects the high quality relationships that young people form with the health team.

Group work sessions are used very effectively to deliver information and advice to young people. They learn about a variety of health related topics. These include sexual health, drugs, alcohol, smoking, emotional well-being, and healthy eating. This supports them to have the correct knowledge and information in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle after they leave the service. In addition, group work is effective in helping young people to learn about social issues such as domestic violence, knife crime, internet safety, gangs, and pornography. All young people attend group work sessions regularly. As a result, they are helped to consider their offending behaviour, have the opportunity to contribute effectively to their communities, and engage more respectfully with others.

Transitions arrangements are strong. Clear transition plans are developed from the point of admission. This means that a successful move into the community is always a priority. Before discharge the home ensures that future accommodation, education, and health arrangements are in place. This supports a smooth transition and reduces the risk of re-offending. Effective resettlement is promoted because the home enables some young people to transition to and from the secure unit with their own staff team and staff from their prospective placement. Managers intend to use the lessons learned from this innovative work to further develop practice.

### Quality of care **good**

The home provides a nurturing and supportive environment for young people to grow and develop. Members of staff look for opportunities to praise young people and offer reassurance when needed. As a result, young people seek out the company of staff and enjoy warm, affectionate relationships. The home ensures that young people are able to raise concerns or make complaints in a variety of ways. The home ensures that young people can make a complaint directly to staff or to external advocates. Complaints are responded to promptly by managers who use them positively as a means of improving the quality of care provided. As a result, young people feel listened to and respected by those who care for them.

The home works well with placing authorities, education and health professionals to produce detailed care plans for each young person. These plans are well understood by staff working in the home and adapted promptly in light of changes to presenting behaviour, health assessments, and educational progress. Handovers are very well organised to ensure that all necessary information is shared. Because staff clearly understand the changing needs of young people, they are able to deliver high quality care and support.

Good systems are in place to support staff to identify and address needs that relate to the culture, heritage and personal identity of young people. Staff demonstrate very good commitment in helping young people practice their religion, and celebrate their individuality. All staff understand how the background of young people impacts on their presentation and behaviour in the home. Because they are so empathetic, they are able to address the underlying causes of challenging behaviours. This helps young people to develop improved social skills and insight over the course of their placement at the home.

Well established and high quality health care systems ensure that young people undergo a thorough assessment of their health care needs when admitted to the home. A multi-agency team of health professionals make sure that any health concerns are addressed promptly. As a result, young people make great strides towards developing improved physical, emotional and mental health.

Young people take part in a good range of stimulating activities. The sports hall, fitness gym, and secure outside play area are well used to ensure that young people lead active lives and have the opportunity to improve their levels of fitness during their time at the home. The home is good at arranging social occasions such as 'film nights' and themed evenings. Because young people have opportunities to relax, and have fun they develop their social skills and abilities to mix with their peers and adults.

**Keeping children and young people safe** good

There are robust systems in place to ensure that the safety of the young people is promoted to a good standard. Safeguarding systems are very well embedded in practice and staff are aware of what to do and who to pass information to, if they have a concern. Staff training in Safeguarding ensures that their practice is underpinned by their knowledge. Close liaison with representatives from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LCSB) ensures that any concerns are passed on promptly. A representative from the LCSB speaks very positively about the openness of communication and the willingness of the home to reflect upon practice. Records maintained are of a very good standard and show how issues have been addressed and resolved.

There have been two separate incidents where young people have tried to abscond since the last inspection. This happened while they were attending medical appointments in the community. Both incidents were addressed effectively by the members of staff and the young people were safely returned to the home. The necessary agencies were informed of the events.

Bespoke plans of care encourage young people to behave positively. Each young person's has individual targets relevant to their behaviour and which are achievable. This ensures that the young people have an investment in their own program and experience success and rewards when they reach their targets. For example, a young person may earn extra time to watch their television in their room at night if they achieve the targets set for them, such as showing respect to others. One young person comments 'it's good, it helps me to behave.'

Restraint is only used when absolutely necessary. The home uses a method of physical intervention which does not use pain compliance techniques. Incidents involving physical restraint are reviewed by both managers from the home and an external representative from the LCSB. This ensures that practice is robustly assessed and monitored and the young people's safety and wellbeing is promoted.

Good relationships between members of staff and the young people enables discussion and reflection on behaviour rather than a reliance on sanctions and negative consequences. This enables them to reflect on their conduct, its impact on others and how to improve. However, sanctions are imposed if the behaviour is deemed serious enough. Any sanctions imposed are audited by managers. The records include the young people's comments and are reviewed to see if they are effective.

Incidents of single separation are recorded appropriately and are scrutinised by senior managers in order to ensure that young people are not kept apart from their peers for unacceptable lengths of time. Behaviour is assessed during each incident and when the risk is seen to pass, the young person re-joins the group. This approach has led to decreased incidents where single separation has been used.

Any searches carried out on young people are only carried out if there is a perceived



risk to the young person or other people. There are no routine searches of young people. This approach ensures that their privacy and dignity is respected and upheld.

Bullying behaviour is managed very well. Members of staff are aware of the dynamics within the group and areas which may cause tension or conflict. They address incidents robustly and give very strong messages to the young people about bullying. Young people confirm that bullying is not a problem in the home. 'They won't stand for it' is a comment from a young person.

Recruitment of all new members of staff includes all the necessary background checks to ensure that only adults with appropriate histories work with the young people.

The home is appropriately safe and security is maintained to good standard. Risk assessments, whether based on activities or individual young people's behaviours, are regularly reviewed to ensure they are relevant and up to date. This further promotes the safety of both the young people and members of staff. Young people and staff are regularly involved in fire drills to ensure they know how to safely evacuate the building in the event of a fire.

Unanimous feedback from young people in the home was that they feel safe living there.

## **Leadership and management**

**good**

The home is currently in a period of transition. Since the previous full inspection, a new service manager has been appointed. The procedures for him to be registered with Ofsted are progressing. He has been confirmed in post for just over a month but has worked with the previous Registered Manager prior to her leaving, in order to ensure smooth succession planning. This internal appointment has had a knock-on effect with some other posts in the home, resulting in other staff receiving temporary promotions. However this has not impacted negatively in the running and operation of the home.

There have been a number of changes to the staff team who directly care for young people. Currently there are vacancies, which has necessitated the use of agency staff. However, this situation has been well managed to ensure young people are being looked after at all times by staff they know. As a result, the care of young people remains consistent and the changes have not compromised standards.

Despite these changes, the home continues to move forward and make progress. Strengths and weaknesses are recognised and a number of new initiatives to improve performance have either been put into place or are due to be implemented shortly. This approach ensures there is no complacency. For example, the service manager who is currently reviewing policy and procedure documents has designed a one-

page, quick guide to longer policy documents. These additional guidance documents provide staff with the salient points of a policy, without having to go through a whole document when busy. This is one of a number of innovative practices introduced recently.

Staff confirm they feel well supported. An active, on-going programme of supervision and appraisal provides them with support, as well as a forum to explore their own professional needs and development. This is supplemented by an active training programme, comprising both mandatory and specific training. As a result, staff have the knowledge, skills and competences to meet the diverse needs of the young people in their care.

The home has a good record of compliance and has positively addressed the one requirement and two recommendations carried over from the previous inspection. This has resulted in improvement within the reports produced following the external monitoring visits to the home, where the views of parents are now being reflected. In addition, there is improvement in the recording of single separation incidents and a greater consistency when recording the views of young people following the implementation of a sanction.

Both the internal and external monitoring of the home is taking place regularly and meets with regulatory requirement regarding frequency. However, reports being submitted to Ofsted following the internal monitoring of the home, do not include a record of the consultation taking place with young people, their parents and placing authorities. Although is a breach of the regulations, it does not impact on the wellbeing of the young people.

Since the previous inspection the home has experienced a period of change and transition, which remains on-going. However this is being well managed and has not compromised the standard of care or the progress that the young people are making.

### **Outcomes in education and related learning activities**

**good**

All young people attend education ensuring attendance is good. They are punctual, arriving on time and ready to start their class. Individual needs are identified promptly and accurately on arrival at the centre. Information provided on previous education attainment and any special educational needs, is used well in developing a young person's learning passport. This has been recently introduced and sets out the key objectives and aims for the young person. Where there is insufficient information on prior learning, education staff are proactive in following up existing information and special educational needs statements. When this is not available or unreliable, an appropriate initial assessment of English and Mathematics takes place and this helps shape the learning passport.

Education outcomes and progress are good. Young people engage well with their learning and make good progress relative to their starting point and length of stay. The collection and analysis of progress data has significantly improved and provides a clear indication of the distance they have travelled in their learning. Young people make significant improvements to their English and maths while at the home. Good support has been provided to enable young people to continue with their GCSE work and to take exams. Currently young people are awaiting their functional skills results.

The monitoring of planned learning goals is good and most young people achieve their learning outcome. Significant progress has been made in young people improving their behaviour. Personal and social development is good with young people being able to work in groups, maintain their concentration and complete the tasks set for them. A good focus is on improving English and mathematics and this is linked into other subject areas. The standard of young people's works is mainly good and examples of exceptional work are used on wall displays to celebrate their achievement. Wall displays in classrooms and education enhance and promote a positive leaning environment. A particularly good display of three dimensional work around the solar system was on display in the reception area.

The vocational provision for young people has been improved. External links are used to provide tutors on a needs basis. However, the head of learning recognises that vocational training needs to expand further to extend the variety and range of courses available. Mobility has been used during education to extend learning. For example, visits to develop forest skills. However, mobility needs to utilised better to extend and widen learning opportunities.

Young people have access a particularly good range of enrichment activities which are well planned and organised. Activities ensure that they extend their learning. Good links are in place between enrichment and education, with a varied and interesting programmes that meaningfully occupies young people during non term time. Links between Care staff and education are good and help promote a collective learning culture. Links to community provision helps to provide careers information and guidance for young people, where appropriate. Members of the education staff provide reports and attend DTO review meetings. The arrangements for transition to further education or training are good.

Teaching and learning is generally good. Much staff development has taken place to manage poor classroom behaviour. Staff are confident and skilled in de-escalating incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Teachers are skilled in supporting young people, many of whom have very challenging behaviour. Most lessons are well planned and provide challenge for young people. They receive good encouragement to progress from teachers. Teachers have a good understanding of individual young people's needs and work persistently to ensure they engage. They are good at adapting sessions to best suit learning. Information learning technology where available, is used by staff but is not widely available within the

education department and not used interactively by young people. Teachers need to be more creative in the use of information learning technology. Recently, electronic tablets(on loan from the local authority) have been used as an effective learning resource in Information Technology classes. The two learning support assistants are employed well to support and help the less able young people progress.

Good use is made of the young persons learning passport to review and set targets. Young people are clear about what they needed to do in order to progress. Their work is reviewed daily by teachers who set clear personal development targets. Targets are negotiated with young people who have a good involvement with setting their objectives. Staff have a good rapport with young people and high levels of mutual respect are in place. Education provides a harmonious and positive learning environment.

Feed back to young people from teachers, and assessment of their work, is timely and provides clear guidance and encouragement to progress. The correction of spellings and punctuation in written word is not consistently good, in a minority of cases teachers have failed to make corrections.

In education the rewards and merit system is used well to celebrate good behaviour. Young people are capable of achieving awards for good behaviour within the education department. Achievements within the week are celebrated well at a group assembly on Fridays.

The strategic development of education and learning at the home by the head of learning is excellent. There is a strong focus on quality improvement. Since taking up post, a complete review of learning activities has taken place. The curriculum has undergone changes and now emulates mainstream provision. A strong focus has been on staff development and improving the quality of learning. Much work has taken place to develop teachers who are new to the home. Staff receive observations of teaching and learning. The results of which are used as part of the performance management system. Opportunities for staff development are good and with the introduction of peer observations, the sharing of good practice is in place. Data systems have been improved and data analysis is being used to effectively evaluate learning.

A balanced and comprehensive curriculum is in place which has a strong focus on the promotion and development of English and mathematics. This also includes life skills, art, cookery, ICT, science and humanities. Young people undertake physical activity every day and this is planned into their timetable.

## 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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