

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Michelle Moss
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is privately owned.

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**.

Young people are provided with a safe, secure, caring and stimulating environment. They are making good progress educationally, emotionally and physically from the starting point of their placement.

Young people feel safe and supported through personalised care planning which is aimed at reducing risks, meeting need and improving their well-being. They experience a climate where they have the mutual trust and respect of care staff and know they have their best interests at the forefront of their practice.

Young people are given opportunities to participate in a range of activities and to stay safely in touch with family and friends.

The Registered Manager is ambitious and energetic in looking at different ways to improve the provision of care. This includes having a development plan that enhances outcomes for young people. The home has no re-occurring shortfalls. Nevertheless, one improvement is required on the quality of recruitment checks, in particular where care staff have previously worked in similar roles.

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
26 (2001)	ensure full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the employment of staff as listed under schedule 2. In particular, where a person has previously worked in a position whose duties involved work with children or vulnerable adults, so far as reasonably practicable verification of the reason why the employment or position ended. (Regulation 26.2(b) and Schedule 2.4)	07/11/2014

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people use the advice and encouragement received from staff to start to improve their school attendance. This enables them to see their education much more of an opportunity to achieve qualifications, which takes them one step closer to their aspirational goals.

Young people are given an opportunity to make a safe, secure and caring relationship with care staff and to use this relationship to improve their health and well-being. For example, young people listen to staff's advice on the risks to health associated with smoking. By taking on-board this advice, young people are reducing their dependency.

Young people utilise the varied activities the home offers to enable them the stay physically active and pursue their individual interests.

Young people benefit from a clean and comfortable physical environment that promotes their personal hygiene, health and well-being.

Young people use the guidance and support of care staff to help them develop coping strategies that enable them to self-manage their emotions more safely.

Young people's willingness and enthusiasm to engage with care staff means they maximise opportunities to learn life skills, such as cooking. These skills mean they are better prepared for their transition from being a young person to becoming a young adult.

Quality of care

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

Young people receive genuine care based on mutual trust and respect. Care staff

ensure young people are afforded positive and inclusive activities including leisure, sport and recreation. As a result, young people are able to explore inclusive activities that reflect their diverse needs.

Care staff work diligently to make sure young people experience care that is tailored to their individualised needs. This starts with having quality care planning in place that help to reduce risks, meet their needs and to improve their overall well-being. The success of the plan sits with the home taking a multi-agency approach. This includes, joint planning taking place with the placing authority, school and ensuring young people are involved in decisions that directly affect them.

Arrangements for the storage and safe administration of medication are well established. These measures continue to ensure young people are able to receive all their prescribed medication in accordance with their doctor's instructions. Young people have access to a range of diverse health resources. For example, young people are able to access the Children and Adolescent Mental Health and therapeutic counselling services. These services help them to better understand their own health needs and to have the support they need to overcome difficulties from their past.

Care staff support young people to sustain contact with family and friends, whilst still acknowledging where safeguards are required. As a result, young people are able to sustain safe family and friendship links.

Considerable work is completed to help support young people to enhance their learning through improving their school attendance. This means young people are beginning to overcome barriers in their learning and enter into General Certificates in Secondary Education (GCSEs) and accredited awards.

Young people are aware of how they can complain if they have any concerns about their care. This enables them to practice their rights.

The house is bright and inviting to enable young people to settle into their new environment. The care staff encourage young people to personalise their bedrooms, so that they can gain a sense of belonging and personal identity.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people feel safe, protected and valued by the care staff supporting them.

Care staff are trained in aspects of safeguarding. They are alert to the risks to young people from others who are prepared to exploit their additional vulnerabilities. This extends to care staff being aware of the traits and signs of potential child sexual exploitation and the link to young people being missing from care. To reduce these risks, care staff work in line with joint protocols and follow welfare check lists so that early intervention is secured. Because of these measures, young people understand why care staff are concerned about their whereabouts and how they need to work

with staff so that they stay safe in the community.

Recruitment and selection procedures are mainly rigorous to create a high threshold so that only suitable staff get to work with young people. Nevertheless, the organisation is not always securing verification as to why a previous employment ended when a new staff member has in the past worked with children or vulnerable adults. As a consequence, not every avenue of safe recruitment is secured so that all elements of safeguarding young people remain robust.

Care staff encourage and provide different opportunities for young people to safely express their emotions. This enables young people to use thinking skills so that they can self-guide and manage their behaviours before they escalate and place themselves and others at danger. As a result, young people take on more responsibility for their own behaviour management and through talking, they are beginning to problem solve their difficulties. This means care staff avoid the necessity of using any form of physical intervention.

The physical environment is safe and takes into account the needs and characterises of young people the home cares for. This extends to fire safety checks being completed at regular intervals.

Leadership and management

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

The Registered Manager has been in post since July 2014 and holds their level five Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's services. The Registered Manager plays a significant role in fostering a positive atmosphere within the home. They work well with parents and professionals to ensure communication is effective so that the best interests of young people remains at the forefront of decision making. This is validated by comments made by professionals who remark communication is consistently good.

The Registered Manager has a good system in place to self-evaluate the quality of care. This starts by having a clear and detailed development plan which provides actions in how ongoing improvement is going to be achieved. The registered provider also ensures there are internal and external quality assurance systems which take account of young people's care experiences and report on the measurable difference the home is making to improve positive outcomes.

Care staff are well supported, supervised and take accountability for their work. Training and development is good. This means care staff benefit from having access to effective courses that enable them to have a sound knowledge and understanding of key aspects of childcare practice. There is a good balance of experience among care staff, with individual members being well qualified. These qualifications range from National Vocational qualifications to some care staff holding Social Work degrees.

The home's arrangement for the assessing, planning, reviewing, recording and reporting on care is clear and concise. This enables the young person's journey to be formally captured and used to plan for their future.

The home has a clear, accessible and comprehensive Statement of Purpose that clearly sets out its aims and objectives. These objectives are being utilised in everyday practice, inclusive of ensuring young people feel safe, protected and well cared for.

The deployment of care staff is based on the needs of young people. Professionals comment positively on staffing and how in particular, this enables young people to receive consistent care.

Since the last inspection all previous shortfalls have been addressed. This has seen gaps in staff knowledge being addressed and a strengthening of care practice so that young people experience consistent care that focuses on their individual needs.

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.