

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	13/06/2012
Inspector	Elizabeth Tanner
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Provision subtype	Children's home

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Service information

Brief description of the service

The children's home is run by a private organisation. It provides accommodation and care for up to two children or young people in the main house and one young person in the cottage annex on the other side of the driveway. The accommodation is for young people with 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 **good**.

Overall, this home provides personalised good quality care for young people. Young people make progress from their starting points, particularly with regards to education and improved behaviour. Young people say they like living in this home and enjoy positive relationships with staff members. Individualised care is offered in a homely environment. Young people feel safe in this home because of the care given by a small staff group.

The Registered Manager and management team work hard to ensure the home is managed effectively. However, there are some areas requiring improvement from this inspection and three requirements and one recommendation have been made to improve practice and outcomes for young people. None of the requirements impact negatively on the welfare or safety of children and 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
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15 (2001)	ensure that children accommodated in the home are provided at all reasonable times with access to a telephone on which to make and receive personal calls in private and which they may use without reference to persons working in the home (Regulation 15(4))	31/07/2012
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose (Regulation 17B (3))	10/07/2012
34 (2001)	supply to HMCI a report in respect of any review conducted for the purposes of paragraph (1). In particular forward Regulation 34 reports to Ofsted of the monitoring of this individual home. (Regulation 34 (2))	31/07/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure there is a written record of all medication, treatment and first aid given to children during their placement. This is in particular regard to the accurate recording of dosage for liquid medicines.(NMS 6.15)

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for children and young people are **good**.

Young people make good progress in this service. They benefit from a high staffing ratio which leads to supportive and consistent care. This in turn leads young people to gain in confidence and begin to form attachments. One young person said, 'the staff are nice' and 'it's a nice place'.

Young people's physical and mental health is promoted within the home. One social worker said a young person was 'calmer and less volatile' since moving to this home. Regular consultation meetings are held with health and social care agencies when appropriate to ensure young people receive appropriate and consistent management of their health needs. As a result of this young people benefit from improved physical and mental health and begin to develop positive self-esteem.

Young people are in education or on work experience and are making significant progress compared to their starting points at the beginning of the placement. They have good attendance and achieve educationally since living in this home. Contact with family and significant other people is supported appropriately.

Young people are able to assume responsibilities appropriate to their age and care plan. They are prepared for independent living and are supported with routine daily skills such as shopping, budgeting and laundry.

Quality of care

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

Young people are cared for by a small staff team who provide a caring environment with clear rules and boundaries. Care planning documentation is in place and is generally of a good quality. Issues of diversity are reflected well within the documentation and key work sessions indicate work undertaken to challenge discriminatory behaviour. This means young people are appropriately challenged about such attitudes or behaviours.

Young people are actively involved in the day-to-day decisions about their care. They exercise choice in respect of menus, clothing and activities and are consulted in respect of religious and cultural needs they might have. Young people's views are sought in meetings with the deputy manager as well as in key work sessions. Young people have appropriate explanations given when a request is refused. Such involvement helps develop confidence and brings a sense of participation.

Young people have made significant progress in education and training. Staff liaise with schools and work placements to assist with attendance and achievement. Education is supported within the home and improvement celebrated. As a result of this young people develop a sense of achievement and aspiration. The home has effective access to health resources and young people are encouraged to engage with health professionals. Medication is dispensed safely in the home and recording is completed. The recording of dosage in respect of some liquid medication is not as accurate as it should be and means that exact quantities of medication remaining are not clear.

A range of activities are available to young people outside of the home. This includes involvement in local groups such as football or cadets as well as individual activities such as horse riding or fishing. Such activities enable young people to develop new skills and support positive involvement in the neighbourhood.

The home is well maintained and furnished to a good standard. Young people personalise their own living areas and are encouraged to take pride in their environment. There is appropriate privacy and a separate annex that can be used for residents who are moving towards living independently. Young people do not have access to their own dedicated landline which could compromise their ability to access outside agencies in a timely manner. The impact of this shortfall is lessened by the low numbers of young people in placement so requests to use the phone can usually be accommodated in a prompt manner.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people feel safe in the home. Staff have a good understanding as to how to keep young people safe. Effective policies and procedures are in place that staff use

to ensure young people remain safe.

Staff have established procedures in place if young people go missing and these procedures are agreed with the police. The frequency with which young people go missing from this placement is much reduced and young people say this is because 'the rules are reasonable'. This reduction in young people going missing means that they are less likely to be at risk of harm in the community.

Positive behaviour is actively promoted. Physical restraint is rarely used but staff are trained to ensure its effective and safe use if necessary. Any restraint is recorded appropriately within each young person's case file but no central log of restraints is maintained. This means that the ability of the management team to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of such interventions is reduced.

Staff are carefully recruited and selected and appropriate checks obtained. Appropriate safety checks are made in respect of any agency staff used by the organisation. This means young people are cared for by suitably vetted and selected staff.

Young people are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Staff complete general risk assessments to monitor and ensure that young people are kept safe from known hazards. Young people take part in regular fire drills; checks and tests of fire safety equipment are also carried out.

Leadership and management

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

The home has a permanent manager who is registered with Ofsted. This manager manages two homes within the organisation and the day-to-day management of this home lies with the deputy manager. This system works effectively and offers consistency of care for young people.

All concerns and complaints raised since the last inspection have been effectively addressed and resolved. The manager leads a suitably experienced staff team who are able to understand the individual needs of young people. There are staff vacancies at present but recruitment for new staff is underway and planning is in place to ensure consistency of care for young people. Disruption to young people is therefore lessened.

Staff receive regular formal supervision and appraisals that support their development. This means that young people work with a staff team who are able to effectively identify and address their needs.

The Statement of Purpose details the aims and objectives of the home. It gives clear guidance on the facilities and services provided. Young people and placing authorities understand the purpose of the home and the outcomes it aspires to achieve.

The deputy manager ensures that monitoring tools are in place to scrutinise the quality of care for young people. These reports are adequate and actively seek feedback from young people and placing authorities. These reports are not submitted to Ofsted as is required, but the impact of this shortfall on the young people in placement is minimal. Staff and managers are beginning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the home and there is a development plan in place. Consequently, young people live in a continually developing home that recognises their individual needs.

Staff and managers work with placing authorities to ensure that statutory requirements pertaining to reviews, visits and placement plans are met. One social worker said that when a possibility of a new placement might impact upon a young person in placement the home 'listened to us' and the placement did not go ahead'.

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* (March 2011) and the evaluation schedule for children's homes.