

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspection date</b>	27 October 2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Mark Kersh
<b>Type of Inspection</b>	Key

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	10 July 2009
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## 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.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

## The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

## Service information

### Brief description of the service

This is a children's home working in partnership with a Metropolitan Borough Council. The home is operated by a charitable trust that has a number of children's homes in addition to this home.

The home is a detached house situated within a semi-rural location and provides care and accommodation for up to four young people aged from 13 years to 17 years at any one time.

The ground floor has a lounge, a sensory room, a play room and a kitchen and dining room combined. The first floor has individual bedrooms for young people and a sleep in room for staff. The home is not adapted for wheelchair users.

Three young people currently live in the home, of which two were present during the inspection.

### Summary

At this unannounced full key inspection, all key standards were inspected. This is an outstanding service in most respects, with strong emphasis being placed on involving and seeking the views of those who use the service. The home provides excellent care to young people, with a staff team that is experienced and committed to achieving high standards. Positive relationships exist between staff and young people. Young people are encouraged to eat healthily and take regular exercise. Staff maintain close professional relationships with a wide range of outside agencies in order to safeguard and protect young people. Individual care plans are comprehensive and provide staff and others with valid information to assist them meet the diverse needs of young people. Staff provide young people with excellent support and are supported well themselves by the manager.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

### Improvements since the last inspection

Following the previous inspection the registered manager was asked to improve the plans for young people who are preparing to leave the home. Transition plans now highlight areas of responsibility for key people. This ensures the arrangements set out for young people's preparation into adulthood is coordinated by identified people.

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Young people are provided with a varied, wholesome and nutritious diet. Young people actively contribute to weekly menus. Staff have an excellent understanding of young people's communication methods to enable them to express their preferred choice of meal. There is excellent use of pictorial cards and displays which are used daily, to communicate with young people. Detailed information is kept in relation to young people's likes and dislikes of food.

Young people participate in a range of activities which provides them with regular exercise. All staff are trained in food hygiene and they competently supervise young people to shop, prepare

and cook food. Meals are provided which take into account young people's diverse needs and they experience foods from other cultures.

Young people's primary health care needs are met and specialist health provision is arranged as required. Health plans are comprehensive and provide staff and health professionals with up to date information in respect of individual young people. Parents and placing social workers are regularly consulted and kept informed of outcomes to any appointments attended by young people, in relation to their health.

Young people are protected by trained staff who follow a very effective medication policy. The provisions for storing, administering, recording and disposal of all medication are exceptional. There are excellent quality assurance systems in place, which ensure all medication is accountable. All staff are trained in the use of first aid and are able to respond to minor accidents and illness, before professional advice is sought.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Young people's right to privacy is maintained as all written information in respect of them is stored securely. Staff provide sensitive and flexible personal support to maximise children's privacy, dignity, independence and control over their lives. Staff demonstrate well their responsibility to matters of confidentiality and are professional when sharing confidential information with other professionals.

Young people are able to raise concerns and any issues they may have are listened to and addressed. Inspiring systems, using pictorial symbols, assist staff to understand young people's moods and they respond effectively to resolve any issues young people may have. There is an effective system in place to record and act on any external concerns made known by parents, placing social workers or the local community. There have been no complaints raised following the previous inspection.

Young people are safeguarded as the home has clear policies and procedures in place and staff are aware of their responsibilities. Trained staff assess known risks and formulate strategies that provide beneficial support to help keep young people safe. These strategies include countering bullying, protecting young people from abuse and having safeguards in place should a young person go missing. There have been no safeguarding issues following the previous inspection. Routine and refresher child protection training is carried out and staff demonstrate well their knowledge and relevant procedures to follow should they have any concerns about the young people in their care. In any event staff say all appropriate authorities and parents are notified should a significant event occur.

Young people are assisted by staff to develop socially acceptable behaviour through encouragement and consistency. Staff are skilled in using diversion and distraction strategies to help young people stay safe and minimise inappropriate behaviour. When physical intervention is necessary, it is only used to prevent the likelihood of injury, and to guide young people away from situations. Staff carrying out any restraint are trained in behaviour management techniques that best reflect the physical and emotional needs of the young people they care for. Any incident that involves physical restraint is recorded. This record provides clear detail to validate the action taken by staff.

There are highly effective systems in place for securing the health and safety of young people, staff and visitors inclusive of fire, water and environmental safety. There are comprehensive written risk assessments in place, in relation to health and safety. All the required fire safety checks are routinely carried out, and evacuations involve young people and staff. Guidance is sought from the local fire safety officer and the home has been assessed as being fire safety compliant. All visitors on arrival at the home are informed of the procedure to follow in the event of a fire.

There is overall a rigorous procedure in operation for the recruitment of staff that ensures their suitability to work with young people is validated. The home operates a signing in and out book, visitors do not have unsupervised access to young people.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Support young people receive is outstanding and respectful of rights. Staff engagement with young people is caring and nurturing all of which young people respond to positively. Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities in supporting young people and making their daily lives interesting and fun. Staff gave a good account of young people's diverse needs and how, individually, these are met. Young people are not excluded from anything as a result of their learning disability and are encouraged and supported to take part in all daily living tasks.

Keyworkers take responsibility for ensuring young people's needs are met consistently and address health, social, leisure and sexual issues sensitively. There is an excellent range of displayed information available to young people and staff, good links are maintained with outside professional agencies for support and guidance.

Young people's attendance at school is excellent and fully supported by staff who maintain strong links with teachers and education authorities. Young people engage well with staff during fun activities which have an element of education and learning within them, for example photography, drama and painting.

Activities are well planned to match the individual needs of young people and cater well for the diverse range of their abilities, learning difficulties and personalities. Young people enjoy holidays and participate in groups with other young people. They are made aware of the celebrations and festivities of their own and other communities and celebrate these through well organised themed nights. Staff emotionally reinforce young people when they make a positive effort and do well, and their achievements are celebrated and recognised by certificates awarded to them.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Young people have their needs thoroughly assessed, planned for and reviewed effectively by staff. Individual person centred placement plans are up to date, informative and clear. These plans effectively capture any young people's needs arising from disability, social and cultural development and demonstrate well the appropriate support young people receive from external agencies. Staff inspire young people's involvement in their review and are creative in enabling

young people to express their views. For example, by using an advocacy service or encouraging young people to express their views through video.

Young people's arrangements for maintaining family contact are excellent with carefully considered arrangements in place for all in relation to contact. Staff are committed and encourage young people's social inclusion and ensure family links are maintained with positive experiences and outcomes being achieved. This enables young people to sustain contact with people important in their lives and to remain inclusive of their community during overnight stays at home.

Young people are introduced to the service in a planned and sensitive manner. This includes having introductory visits that enable young people to become familiar with their new environment and the staff team. Equally when young people leave the home, due to their transition to adult services, they visit their new placement and are supported by staff during this process.

Consultation arrangements is an exemplary strength of the home. In addition to regular discussion with families, placing social workers and health professionals, progress reports are sent which include feedback forms about the services the home provides. These arrangements provide management with information which assists staff to significantly enhance all aspects of the service and outcomes for young people.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Young people are being supported, during their transition into adulthood. Young people participate in a number of areas and undertake basic practical daily living tasks, such as, putting their laundry in the washer, preparing snacks and baking. Transition plans are in place and identify clearly the tasks required of those responsible for ensuring young people's transition into another placement is well planned for. Staff work closely with parents during their child's transition and are sensitive to their needs and meet regularly with them to offer support and reassurance.

The accommodation is decorated and furnished to a good standard, providing a domestic style environment for the young people to live in. The home is clean and tidy. It provides a number of communal lounge rooms for the young people to use, which are used for various activities, such as, a sensory room, a games room and the lounge area. The outside facilities for play and recreation are of good design and safe for young people's use. There are sufficient toilet and washing facilities to meet the needs of young people and staff.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. The statement of purpose document makes clear the home's commitment to equality and diversity, which in practice is followed. Young people benefit from being cared for by a team that offers an equal balance of age, gender and ethnicity. Staff have completed equality and diversity training. Young people receive a service designed to meet their diverse needs, as is evidenced by the detailed level of care planning and response to individual need. Young people's awareness is raised by a staff team who provide them with good role models. There is excellent information and posters displayed

and young people participate in events and activities associated with the diverse world around them.

Young people benefit from the excellent leadership provided by the manager to a well established and stable staff team. Proactive measures ensure staff are well supported and supervised as required. Young people are provided with stability and security by a competent staff team. All staff have completed the necessary qualification for working with young people. Staff receive excellent training opportunities and constantly evaluate their working practices with each other and maintain high standards of care for young people.

There is excellent monitoring of the systems within the home, by the manager, who places a strong emphasis on improvement and the overall care and welfare of young people and staff. Comprehensive external monitoring takes place by persons not connected to the home. These visits take into account the quality of administration records and include observations of interaction between young people and staff, and seek their views about the operation of the home.

Young people's case files and other information written about them is of a high standard. This facilitates excellent communication with other professionals.

## **What must be done to secure future improvement?**

### **Statutory requirements**

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, The Childrens Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations.