

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspection date</b>	10/10/2013
<b>Inspector</b>	Linda Leeder
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	28/06/2013
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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

This privately owned children's home provides care and accommodation for two young people with emotional or 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**.

This home strongly promotes young people's aspirations to meet their potential. Young people comment that they enjoy staying here and feel the staff understand and help them during their placement. Young people say they feel safe and respected. There is a positive and relaxed culture that young people respond to. Boundaries are fair and young people both understand and respond to them. Relationships between young people and staff are good.

Staff are proud of the young people and the achievements they have made. It is abundantly clear that young people considerably benefit from a family-style home where they are central to all practice. A parent said, 'he is on the right path and I am more optimistic for his future.' The management team know the strengths and needs of the service and promptly take action to secure improvement.

Care planning is effective and includes the wishes and feelings of young people. A strength of this home is its understanding of and commitment to preparing young people for moving on into independent living and adult life.

There are some areas identified as in need of improvement. These include ensuring that Ofsted are notified of significant events in line with regulations, that staff are supported during their probation and that action continues to be taken to address any concerns expressed by neighbours.

## 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
30 (2001)	ensure that any of the events listed in column 1 of the table in schedule 5 takes place, the registered person shall without delay notify the persons indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table. (Regulation 30 (1))	31/12/2013

## Recommendations

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

- ensure that the registered person continues to take action to address any issues of concern that they identify or which is raised with them, specifically in relation to concerns expressed by neighbours (NMS 21.9)
- ensure that staff are provided with regular supervision, with specific reference to staff who are within their probationary period. (NMS 19.4)

## Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people like living in this home and are happy. A young person said, 'I think it's good. Good food, good staff.' They make good progress both emotionally and educationally. A young person spoke about how much progress they had made since moving in to the home and said, 'the staff helped' and they were, 'proud of going to college'. Young people are engaged in education or employment and have aspirations for their futures. Their attendance at school or colleges is usually very good and they are enthusiastic about learning. Young people benefit from strong boundaries within a nurturing environment. This helps them to develop a positive self-view and emotional resilience.

Some young people do engage in risk taking activities such as running away from the home. However, young people, over time, begin to understand why this behaviour is unsafe and risk taking activities are reduced significantly.

Staff promote contact and see it as an integral part of each young person's placement. They are able to contact family, friends and people important to them without the need for permission from staff. This ensures that young people are at liberty to make contact with those close to them when they wish. A parent said 'staff

really help and support contact.'

Young people are well prepared for living independently. The programme provided for each young person is tailored to their individual needs and is comprehensive and detailed. The independence programme provides support in practical ways such as how to do washing and change a light bulb and also helps in ensuring that young people can manage emotionally by providing ways of finding support locally for concerns that they may have. This increases young people's self-esteem and ability to empathise with others. It develops their maturity and confidence.

## Quality of care

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

Young people have good relationships with staff and generally get on well with each other. A social worker commented, 'The young person has established good relationships with staff; good progress as staff have worked really hard with him, they saw his potential and have provided good role models.' Staff spoke about the importance of building up trust with young people which will help them to stop their risk taking activities.

Statutory reviews are held within timescales and consultation with young people is encouraged. Parents and young people attend these meetings and fully contribute to the decisions affecting their future. Reports written by staff accurately reflect the assessed needs of young people. A social worker remarked that the 'quality of reports are comprehensive and detailed'. Care plans accurately reflect the needs and aspirations of young people. Staff encourage young people to contribute to their plans and make changes if necessary.

Young people comment positively on their experiences of living at this home, one young person said, 'staff listen to me, we have words occasionally, but they are like family.' Relationships between staff and young people are friendly and supportive. Staff consult young people on a daily basis which has had a direct impact on the quality of care provided. For example, young people's views are sought regarding managing their behaviour which has influenced practice within the home. There is a culture in the home of attending education. A member of staff said, 'The staff team endeavour to support all young people to attend education.' Staff consistently and effectively challenge barriers to ensure young people attend and achieve in school. This encourages good outcomes for young people.

There are very few complaints at this home. Young people report that staff listen and respond to their concerns if they have any. Parents are aware that they can make a complaint if they are unhappy with the service. The home has built effective and positive relationships with neighbours and within the local community. However, there has been a complaint from a neighbour about: a friend of a young person who was visiting a young person living at the home; police often visiting the home and noise from young people on one occasion. The home has taken robust steps to resolve these issues and improve relationships with neighbours. These steps include

ensuring that young people's friends remain in the home and garden and working together with the police to protect young people. The home has also attended local neighbourhood meetings. Therefore, this is a home that takes all concerns seriously and as a consequence complaints are rare.

### **Safeguarding children and young people**

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

Young people are kept safe in this home through consistent boundaries that are respected. Young people commented that they feel safe and that staff treat them with respect. Staff have a zero tolerance to bullying and use restorative approaches to resolve issues. Staff also use a restorative approach to ensuring that young people understand the consequences of their actions in relation to issues with their behaviour. The staff are aware of the triggers to some aspects of young people's behaviour. They will therefore take steps to resolve these, such as encouraging friends to visit the home so that staff can ensure their safety and discourage offending behaviour. There has been no use of restraint since the home opened.

Staff have effective procedures in place to ensure young people are protected from harm. Young people who go missing usually return quickly and are welcomed back into the home. Staff can demonstrate, over a period of time, that missing from care episodes reduce.

Investigations into allegations or suspicion of harm are handled fairly, quickly and robustly. The home conducted a thorough and detailed investigation on an occasion when a complaint was made about a person working at the home, however this was not notified to Ofsted.

There is an efficient and robust approach to the recruitment of staff that provides young people with adults who are suitable to care for them safely. Young people are aware of the fire evacuation procedures through regular drills. Electrical appliances are maintained within the required timescale. Health and safety procedures are therefore effective in keeping young people safe.

### **Leadership and management**

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

Young people are cared for by an enthusiastic, highly motivated and dynamic staff team who are qualified, experienced and caring. They are well supported by each other and the management team. Staff consistently said that they love working in the home with the young people. There is a stable staff team who clearly have the interests of the young people at heart.

The Registered Manager makes good use of a range of monitoring activities to ensure the home operates to a high standard in line with its Statement of Purpose. It is also clear that the Registered Manager actively keeps up-to-date with new

legislation and practice developments to improve the quality of the service provided. The management team communicates high expectations to staff and challenges weaknesses. A social worker said, 'The management are committed and reflective. They focus more on getting young people ready for independence.'

Young people are at the centre of practice in this home. The committed and enthusiastic staff and management team see the well-being and happiness of young people as paramount. Young people who go missing regularly are discussed and information is shared to ensure that there is an effective system for professionals with continuing concerns about children who go missing.

Staff comment that they have a good level of support and guidance. However, the home does not follow its own guidance on providing regular support and supervision for staff on probation. Training and development needs are fully met. There is regular training on all aspects of residential childcare that staff found to be relevant and of interest. A parent commented that the staff, 'are there for young people no matter what and this has improved their behaviour.'

## 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.