

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC447645
Inspection date	20/06/2013
Inspector	Michelle Spruce
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	18/10/2012
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2013

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

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 **adequate**.

This adequate service provides good outcomes for young people in an environment where they feel safe. Effective care planning provides individual assessment of need that improves the quality of care. The views of young people are captured through consultation that enhances the running of the home.

The relationships that young people have with staff are trusting and respectful. Young people say they feel safe and know staff are there to support them. The key strengths lie in the effective communication staff have with each other and external professionals.

The manager secures improvement through regular monitoring and review. Development plans outline the objectives for the year to strengthen the delivery of care and improve outcomes.

There are some shortfalls within the service. As a result, six requirements have been made.

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
5 (2001)	ensure to keep under review, and where appropriate, revise the statement of purpose and children's guide and notify Ofsted of any revision within 28 days (Regulation 5(a-b))	31/07/2013
21 (2001)	ensure there are suitable arrangements for the recording, handling, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of any medicines received into the children's home (Regulation 21(1))	31/07/2013
22 (2001)	ensure that electronic or mechanical monitoring devices for the surveillance of children are not used in a children's home except for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned and where all elements of this regulation are met (Regulation 22(1)(a-d))	31/07/2013
25 (2001)	ensure that there are at all times, a sufficient number of suitably qualified, competent and experienced persons working at the children's home (Regulation 25(1)(a-b))	31/07/2013
33 (2001)	supply a copy of the report required to be made under paragraph (4)(c) to Ofsted (Regulation 33(5)(a))	31/07/2013
33 (2001)	supply to Ofsted a report in respect of any review of the quality of care. (Regulation 34(2))	31/07/2013

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people make significant improvement in education from their starting point. A young person said, 'I have completed my exams a year early and am predicted to achieve well in English and Maths.' This improves their confidence and future prospects. A social worker said, 'He was not attending education before he came here, but now attends full time.'

Young people remain in contact with friends and family that are significant to them. A young person said, 'I see my brother now and I have a best mate.' This means young people's family history and links are strengthened, giving them a sense of identity and belonging.

Young people take care with their appearance and belongings because they are proud of who they are. They express their individuality through their choice of clothing and personalisation of their bedrooms. Young people understand why they are in care because they explore their life history through key working. A social worker said, 'He has come on leaps and bounds; he now has contact, goes to school and sleeps at night.'

Young people attend routine health checks to maintain their well-being. One young person said, 'I go to boxing and the gym.' This keeps young people physically fit. They benefit from additional support, provided by external professionals, to help them address issues such as drug and alcohol abuse. This helps raise awareness of

the effects of risk taking behaviour.

Young people improve their life skills because they are responsible for maintaining the home and their room to an expected standard. A young person said, 'I clean the car and my room.' This empowers young people to become independent.

Quality of care

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

Staff and young people get on well and have positive relationships. Staff provide opportunities for young people to share their thoughts and feelings during residents meetings and key work sessions. During these meetings young people make requests that are often met. This confirms staff listen to them. Where staff are not able to meet a request, negotiation takes place to agree a compromise. For example, a young person wanted free time with a friend unsupervised. This was negotiated and as a result, an activity took place with staff supervision which included the friend.

Young people have access to a cordless phone to make private calls to raise concerns or complaints. There are complaints forms readily available for young people, along with advocate telephone numbers on the young people's notice board. Complaints have been made by young people and resolved by the manager. This confirms that the voice of young people is heard and their rights are promoted.

Some young people take responsibility for keeping and taking their own medication and they do this safely. Staff provide a risk assessment and lockable container to ensure the safety of administration and storage.

The arrangements for medication do not follow the home's policy. Prescribed cream stored in the medication cabinet does not state the date of opening in line with the home's guidance. This means young people may be administered medication that has passed its shelf life.

Staff work in partnership with young people, social workers and other professional partners significant to young people. A social worker said, 'Staff are professional and approachable, they attend meetings and provide in-depth monthly reports.' Staff are clear about the individual needs of young people and quality of care planning that assist young people to improve their health and education.

Activities for young people are age appropriate and meet their social and emotional needs. The home is a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where young people can relax. Recent replacement of carpets, furniture and re-decoration has brought the home back to life and given young people a home they are proud of.

Safeguarding children and young people

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

Young people say they feel safe in the home and know staff have their best interests at heart.

Routine use of electronic bedroom door alarms compromises the dignity and privacy of young people who do not require surveillance. Alarms alert staff at night to young people's movements. However, the placement plans do not identify the use and the risk assessments say there is no risk. Although there is written consent from the placing authority, a review of the need for alarms has not taken place.

The manager does not provide sufficient staffing arrangements at night to protect young people who go missing. Although there are two sleep-in staff, they have not been aware when young people have gone missing at night. However, when staff are aware a young person is missing, they take the appropriate action in reporting, searching and liaising with the correct agencies to return young people home safely.

Staff have not yet received training in child sexual exploitation, despite having young people placed who are vulnerable to this risk. Although staff are knowledgeable about child protection and safeguarding, this does not guarantee the right support for young people's needs.

Young people benefit from behaviour management plans that identify the behaviour and support required. Staff manage behaviour with positive praise and reward. The use of physical intervention is only used as a last resort. Young people feel that sanctions are fair and they are given the chance to repair damage they have caused instead of repaying the cost.

There is a robust recruitment and vetting system that protects young people from unsuitable candidates having access to them. Staff are unable to work in the home before suitable clearance checks are received and verified. This keeps young people safe.

The environment is safe and regular monitoring safety checks protect young people, staff and visitors from the risk of injury or harm. Fire drills are completed and young people know what action to take in response to the alarm. As a result, young people live in a safe home.

Leadership and management

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

The Registered Manager and dedicated staff team work effectively in partnership to improve the quality of care in this home that has been in operation for seven months.

The service has not yet concluded the review of care and monthly external monitoring visits because they have not sent these reports to Ofsted.

There is a robust development plan that outlines action required and timescales for

staff to complete. Young people play an important role in developing the service. For example, the manager identified the need to involve young people in the recruitment of staff. This was achieved during the latest recruitment process, giving young people the opportunity to take active participation in securing staff of their choice.

Information in the Statement of Purpose is not a clear reflection of the home's practice. While recently reviewed, it does not reflect the home's policy in relation to the use of mechanical or electronic surveillance for young people. This means information provided is not consistent with the homes practice.

Staff recruited to work in the home confirm they are supported well and attend regular training and supervision as part of their induction and probation.

The manager promptly notifies all significant events relating to the protection of young people to the required authorities. Records are stored correctly and reflect young people's life experiences and plans.

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.