

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC033897
<b>Inspection date</b>	24/10/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Karen Malcolm
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	22/02/2011
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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 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.

### The inspection judgements and what they mean

**Outstanding:** a service that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

**Good:** a service that exceeds minimum requirements

**Satisfactory:** a service that only meets minimum requirements

**Inadequate:** a service that does not meet minimum requirements

## Service information

### Brief description of the service

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for to up to five children and young people with learning disabilities.

### Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is judged to be **good**.

The home provides children and young people with personalised, well-planned care, taking full account of their individual needs and promoting positive outcomes. Outcomes for children and young people are outstanding. Children and young people are treated individually in all aspect of their care. Comprehensive risk assessments associated with individual behaviours are undertaken and monitored.

Children and young people's views about the quality of care are also good, and this was reiterated by their parents and social workers who think that the service provided is exceptional.

The relationship between staff and young people is positive and each child and young person has a key worker whom they know, and speak positively about especially how they support them in different activities and situations.

The majority of the children and young people who are placed in the home have little or no verbal communication. Individual placement/care plans show there are clear support strategies in place which meet each child's or young person's needs and abilities, such as supporting young people to move on appropriately into adult care.

The registered person does not risk assess all activities in which children and young people participate, and the fire risk assessment does not reflect the current area of risk. The Regulation 33 report does not reflect the views of children, young people and staff. Children and young people's grumbles or complaints are not consistently addressed appropriately. The missing person and safeguarding policies have not been updated in line with current legalisation changes. Additional to this any changes to the Regulations, national minimum standards or to the home's procedures is to be implemented and monitored effectively.

### Areas for improvementStatutory 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.

<b>Reg.</b>	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Due date</b>
33 (2001)	ensure that the person carrying out the visit to the home, interviews, with their consent and in private, such of the children accommodated there, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as appears necessary in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home; and make records of any complaints (Regulation 33(4)(a)(b))	31/12/2011
23 (2001)	ensure that all parts of the home to which children have access are so far as reasonably practicable free from hazards to their safety and any activities in which children participate are so far as reasonably practicable free from avoidable risks. (Regulation 23(a)(b))	30/11/2011

## Recommendations

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

- act upon children's views, wishes and feelings, in the day-to-day running of the home and important decisions or changes in the child's life, unless this is contrary to their interests (NMS 1.1)
- ensure that if a child is absent from the home and their whereabouts is not known (i.e. the child is missing), the home's procedures are compatible with and have regard to Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) protocols and procedures maintained and managed by the police or by the local authority for the area where the home is located (NMS 5.6)
- ensure that all staff's work are up dated with any changes to the Regulations and National Minimum Standards and the home's policies and procedures and this is managed effectively (NMS 21.3)
- ensure that the children's home procedure such as the safeguarding policy and procedures is in line with the Government guidance and requirements including the duty to refer information to statutory bodies. (NMS 20.2)

## Outcomes for children and young people

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

Children and young people have made substantial progress in developing a positive self-view and emotional resilience. Young people say, 'I am more relaxed and chilled since I moved here'. Children and young people are helped to make sense of their background in ways they are able to understand. Staff are trained in the different methods of communication used by the children and young people, who are encouraged to share their views and make choices. Children and young people are

seen as individuals.

Staff demonstrate commitment to identify and meet specific, personal needs. Where these cannot be met within the home staff effectively use advocates to ensure that children and young people are able to have their say in an appropriate way according to their needs. Therapeutic services from mainstream health providers and charitable organisations are used to help children and young people through emotional or psychological difficulties. Placement/care plans clearly show how children and young people's physical health needs will be met.

A wide range of activities is enjoyed by children and young people both within the home and in the community. Individual interests are encouraged. Activities in the wider community are utilised, due to the home having their suitable transport and qualified drivers.

All children and young people attend school locally. Most are subject to statements of special educational needs. Absences are only ever due to ill-health. The majority of the children and young people show 100% attendance since moving to the home. There is excellent communication between schools and the home. School reports demonstrate genuine progress made by children and young people. Staff's communication and liaison with schools are effective to ensure children and young people's developmental needs are well met and coordinated.

Staff work proactively with statutory agencies to ensure individual plans, for contact with family and friends, are in place. A culture within the home recognises that positive experiences of contact are to be encouraged. Staff go beyond normal expectations to achieve this.

Most children and young people move on from the home to other residential provision. Staff enthusiastically advocate for the young person to ensure the most appropriate setting is identified. Families and other professionals are engaged in the process to enable all transitions to be a positive experience for every young person.

## **Quality of care**

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

Children and young people are actively encouraged to complain if they are unhappy about any aspect of living at the home. Consideration has been given to this process and the methods in which complaints can be made are non-threatening and appropriate to the age and level of understanding of the child or young person. However, if an issue is raised by a child and may be viewed as a minor complaint or a grumble, the process in which this issue is addressed may not be consistent with the home's procedures. Therefore, the issue may be missed or not addressed. The home has received a number of compliments in relation to the care that they provide to children and young people placed. Staff help children and young people to understand why it may not be possible to act upon their wishes in all cases.

Children and young people enjoy positive and constructive relationships with staff and with each other. Children and young people share very positive stories of where this has taken place. Staff enjoy seeing children and young people make good progress. Children and young people, in turn, are appreciative of the keen attention paid to them by staff. The management team encourages positive relationships between staff and children and having a key worker system enhances the relationship children have built.

Children and young people receive very individualistic and personalised care to meet their overall needs and understanding. Staff pay very good attention to the impact of children and young people's disabilities and provide services that reflect the social model of disability. Children and young people are able contribute to their care and plans are of a good quality.

Children and young people lead healthy lifestyles while living at the home. For example, all children and young people are promptly registered with primary care services soon after they are admitted into the home and files contain comprehensive health care and medical information which is understood and known by all staff. Children and young people's placement/care files contain clear feedback from specialist services such as speech and language services and occupational therapists. Children and young people have good access to consultant paediatricians and dieticians if required.

Staff receive training in first aid, medication management and food hygiene and these are reviewed regularly. The home's provision of food is good and children and young people enjoy varied, well-balanced and nutritious meals that meet their individual needs. Staff are very aware of the eating and feeding regimes of children and young people and they ensure that they receive safe, appropriate assistance at meal times. Those children and young people who are able are encouraged to develop skills that promote their independence such as preparing their own drinks and snacks where this is practicable.

The home provides a very good range and choice of activities for children and young people to participate in, which are purposeful and enjoyable. All activities are supervised taking into account the safety of the child and young person at all times. However, only high risk activities are assessed with regards to the child's safety, and day-to-day activities such as trampolining are not always assessed for each child.

The child and young person's cultural background and personal identity are acknowledged. The majority of the children and young people have non-verbal communication and their cultural needs and identity is mainly sourced through discussion with their next of kin or close relatives.

The home is a purpose-built bungalow unit for up to five children or young people. At present four of the five bedrooms are being used and the fifth bedroom is currently used as an office until such time as a placement is made. All bedrooms are individually decorated to the needs, style and taste of the child or young person. Staff encourage all children and young people to personalise their room. The sensory

room is modern and houses age appropriate equipment. All communal rooms have recently been decorated and are spacious. The dining room is the place where the children, young people and staff share meals together in a friendly family atmosphere and the garden is spacious and is always used.

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

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

The home's health and safety policies and procedures, which include fire, are reviewed annually. Other appropriate checks are completed and equipment is maintained in good order. However, following a recent notification when the fire brigade was called due to a small fire in the building, the home's fire risk assessment was reviewed but not updated to reflect the current changes taken to minimise the risk of an incident of this nature occurring again and how the home is now made safer. Therefore, all risk areas with regards to fire had not been addressed fully to safeguard all persons working, living or visiting the home.

Children and young people say that they feel safe and are safe. They also say that if there are any issues where they felt unsafe, they know that staff will address it and keep them safe.

Staff have a good understanding of how to ensure children and young people's needs are to be met in respect of their privacy. Staff encourage them to be independent and will only intervene where appropriate so that the child's or the young person's privacy is respected.

Children and young people also feel protected and are protected from significant harm. Practices to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people are good. Although, the home and the Health Trust safeguarding policies and procedures are in place, these have not been updated for sometime and therefore do not meet the current legislation changes.

Children and young people rarely go missing and if they do go missing, they are quickly returned in accordance with the home's policy and procedures and they are responded to positively on their return. Risk assessments are updated accordingly to ensure all areas of risk are now managed effectively and safely for the child or young person.

Positive behaviour is promoted and restraint is rarely used. When used it is in strict accordance with the legislative framework.

Staff and volunteers working with children and young people in the home are carefully selected and vetted and there is a good monitoring system which is overseen by the Health Trust.

Children and young people enjoy excellent relationships with each other and feel secure living in an environment where bullying is not tolerated. The home ensures

that the mix of children and young people is appropriate and that behavioural strategies are in place so that behaviour is effectively managed and that any incidences of bullying are eliminated or minimised.

## **Leadership and management**

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

The home is effectively and efficiently managed. Children, young people and staff enjoy good access to Registered Manager who they feel is flexible and approachable at all times. The Registered Manager also has extensive management experience, particularly in caring for disabled children and young people and is also well qualified to manage the home. All staff feel the manager understands the care and support that children and young people need. This is seen as a strength. The manager is committed to her role and responsibilities.

There were no requirements or recommendations from the previous inspection. The Registered Manager is aware of what are the strengths and weakness of the service and what needs to be improved. The manager demonstrates a clear capacity for continuous improvement, based on her track record of performance.

Children and young people are guided through and know what services they can expect from the home. The children's guide is produced individually. It is unique to each child's need, shows how they will be cared for and by whom, and is in a format that is appropriate to their communication needs. The Statement of Purpose accurately provides a description of what the home sets out to do for the children and young people that it accommodates.

The home has a good relationship with the placing authorities and they are clear about the aims and objectives of the home and what services and facilities it provides for the child.

The registered person has a clear system in place to regularly monitor the quality of care being provided. However, when there is a change or update to a policy or procedure the system in place is to ask staff to read, sign and date that they have understood the new change. However, this system has not been managed or monitored effectively to ensure all staff have read or understood the change. The Regulation 33 monitoring visits are also completed regularly and are carried out by an independent visitor. However, the report produced does not always show how views are sought at each visit. Also, although a number of policies and procedures are reviewed regularly, these are not always updated, such as the missing person, the fire risk assessment and the safeguarding policy. None of these are in line with current legalisation changes.

The home employs a sufficient number of staff, who are appropriately trained and effectively supervised and supported, in order to meet the care needs of children and young people. Staff are given additional responsibilities to enhance their skills and knowledge. Staff receive good quality training to enhance their individual skills and to

keep them up to date with professional and legal developments.

Children's records are clear, up to date and stored securely, and contribute to an understanding of the child's life.

All significant events relating to the protection of children accommodated in the home are notified by the registered person of the home to the appropriate authorities and appropriate action is taken following the incident.

Equality and diversity practice is **good**.