

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspection date</b>	10/07/2013
<b>Inspector</b>	Diane Thackrah
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	21/03/2013
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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

This service is registered with Ofsted to provide education and care to a maximum of 11 young people. It is a small privately owned independent residential school and children's home for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, often combined with moderate learning 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 **outstanding**.

The quality of care for young people has an exceptional impact on the quality of their lives and they make exceptional progress in their educational, personal, social and cultural development. The views of young people are central to the way in which the home operates and develops its practice. Young people have highly positive views about the quality of their experience in the home. They enjoy excellent relationships with staff. There is a rigorous approach to monitoring quality in the home which results in high quality care for young people which improves their outcomes. Routine monitoring of the quality of practice is used to drive forward continuous improvement. Staff and management are highly motivated and ambitious for continuous improvement.

### Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **outstanding**.

Outcomes for young people are outstanding. They enjoy exceptionally good quality relationships with one another and with staff. Staff promote a culture of mutual respect and this contributes to young people's enjoyment of the home. A young person said, 'It's good here, the staff are fair.' Another said, 'I really like it and don't want to leave.'

Young people are nurtured and valued; consequently, they feel respected and develop confidence and a strong sense of self-esteem. They make excellent progress

in this area from the points when moving into the home. A social worker said, 'He has made genuine progress and his relationship with his key worker is strong. His behaviour has significantly improved.' Another social worker said, 'He is expected to go on to college and do well. He is so happy in the home. His social and communication skills have risen dramatically and there is no question that he is making progress and having a more positive life.'

Young people make exceptional progress with their education. They go on to do well in exams and to attend further education. Staff members say young people who cannot write when they first arrive go on to study at college. Young people have opportunities for engaging in a wide range of enriching and stimulating activities. For example, many young people take part in local clubs and groups or have part-time employment. This helps them to make achievements and develop into well-rounded and caring young adults.

Young people understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and have a strong sense of their own well-being. They understand risks to their health and have opportunities for making good choices in relation to this. A health care professional said of a young person, 'He has come on so well in the last three years since being here and has started to take some responsibility for his health.'

## Quality of care

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

The quality of care is outstanding. Staff have consistently high aspirations for young people. A staff member said, 'We want young people to become emotionally strong so they will do well in life.' A social worker said, 'Staff strive to help him progress.' Barriers to the full participation of young people are consistently challenged. This is brought about through high staffing levels and joint working between school and care staff that allow young people to make educational achievements.

Staff are proactive in supporting young people to engage positively in community activities that reflect individual interests and abilities. Achievements are celebrated and this supports young people to make excellent achievements in all areas of their lives. A social worker said, 'This has been an excellent placement.'

Young people enjoy living in a good quality environment. The home and school offer a high standard of accommodation which is safe, well maintained and clearly designed with young people's welfare in mind. For example, there is space for boarders to relax and be comfortable, to take time out and to enjoy the pleasant gardens.

Young people's complex needs are well understood by staff and effectively addressed through the robust care planning system. This places young people at the centre of practice in the home. As a result, young people make excellent progress. There is a highly individualised approach to young people's care; issues relating to young people's cultural background are identified and effectively addressed. For example,

staff ensure there is close working with family members where this is appropriate. Staff are proactive in finding ways to support individual needs and this ensures they make progress. Young people are involved individually in groups or clubs out with the home such as scouts and trampolining.

There is an excellent approach to behaviour management which supports young people in developing skills to manage conflict and develop positive behaviour. Young people make huge progress in this area. Staff are effective in listening to young people and in respecting views and wishes. They communicate exceptionally well. There is exceptional feedback from a number of professionals who work with the home about the quality of partnership working. The management challenge shortfalls in the practice of other agencies to ensure that young people receive the support they need.

The views and wishes of young people are central to the running of the home. Staff provide support that ensures that all young people are able to have their say and feel genuinely valued. A high value is placed on any concerns raised by young people and there is a swift and effective response to these with lessons learnt.

There is safe and effective handling of medication that ensures the promotion of good health and helps young people feel confident that their health needs are well addressed.

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

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

There is excellent provision for ensuring that young people are safe and protected from harm. Young people feel safe and are safe. A social worker said, 'The home keeps him safe and there is no question that the excellent risk assessments and behaviour management plan supports this. He is supported to take risks and learn from this.' Another said, 'They keep him extremely safe. He has made excellent progress and can now stick to appropriate boundaries.'

There is a robust system for risk assessment which keeps young people safe while allowing them to take controlled risks as part of their development. As a result, young people behave in a way that keeps them safe. Young people do not go missing from this home. Staff have an excellent understanding of the home's missing policy which contributes to young people's safety. Staff are proactive in preventing young people from going missing. They regularly talk to young people about personal safety and there is a strong relationship with local police, who are fully aware of young people's vulnerabilities should they go missing. Staff have an effective approach to keeping young people safe when they are away from the home without staff. There is regular telephone contact based on an individualised risk assessment and consultation with social workers. This means that young people have a strong sense of safety and well-being and do not engage in risk taking behaviours.

Staff are proactive and alert to concerns about young people's welfare. There is a swift and robust response to safeguarding issues and excellent liaison and cooperation with other professionals. There is regular staff training and discussion on safeguarding issues ensuring there is a strong and confident approach to child protection. The high quality relationships shared between staff and young people enable staff to identify vulnerabilities in young people and effectively address them.

Young people make exceptional progress with their behaviour from the point of moving in which means that physical restraint is rarely used. There are clear roles and responsibilities for staff and clear rules and expectations for young people. This effective approach to behaviour management and positive role models means that young people make excellent progress in managing their own behaviour.

The strong sense of security supports young people to feel safe in the home. Young people live in a safe environment and are protected from risks. There are high levels of safety awareness which are embedded in the home's culture. Robust checking of health and safety issues is monitored closely by senior management. As a result, the home is physically safe and secure. Staff clearly understand their roles in ensuring that bullying does not occur within the home. Young people know they have access to an adult that they can talk to and trust. This results in them feeling safe and secure and there being extremely low incidences of bullying.

## **Leadership and management**

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

There is outstanding leadership and management which ensures that young people make progress in all areas of their lives. Staff are highly motivated by management who consistently strive for improvement. The management team are proactive in evaluating the effectiveness of the home. There are on-going efforts to take steps to improve practice following a process of review and reflection. For example, there is a self-assessment process which is reviewed on a regular basis. There is a rigorous approach to obtaining stakeholder feedback and information gained is used to secure further development and improvement. There is an honest approach to weakness which is used to progress. Strengths are identified and built on and there are realistic and challenging goals for development such as the systematic review of care planning and obtaining regular stakeholder feedback from a wide variety of sources. Learning from new legislation and practice developments is embedded in the culture of the home. Improvements are sustained and on-going.

Shortfalls identified at the last inspection have been positively approached and this means that the safety and well-being of young people has been improved in relation to medication handling and restraint.

Staff contribute to the home's positive ethos and this helps young people to thrive. Staff are competent and highly motivated and receive excellent support from management. As a result, they are highly motivated and provide excellent support to young people which helps them thrive. A social worker said, 'Staff are incredibly

professional and we are confident in their skills.' Staff feel extremely well supported and feel part of a learning organisation. They say, 'There is very strong communication within the team' and 'Supervision is valued here, you can't underestimate its value.' Consequently, a high value is placed on support, training and development, which means that young people benefit from high quality care.

There is excellent communication with social workers, parents and carers and this results in a strong approach to ensuring the best for young people. High value is placed on young people's views and wishes and these are actively sought. As a result they have a strong sense of feeling valued. There is excellent record keeping and a robust approach to confidentiality. This means that young people benefit from a highly professional approach to their care.

## 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.