

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC448615
<b>Inspector</b>	Jim Palmer
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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<b>Registered person</b>	Wood View Learning Community Federated Governing Body
<b>Registered person address</b>	Wood View Learning Community 51 Lancaster Gardens PLYMOUTH PL5 4AA
<b>Responsible individual</b>	Andrea Susanne Hemmens
<b>Registered manager</b>	Kathleen Anne Carpenter
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	15/10/2013

<b>Inspection date</b>	20/08/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>good</b>
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

## Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	<b>good</b>
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This is a good home with some outstanding features.

Young people benefit from an outstanding quality of care during their short breaks at this home. The service is effectively managed by the management team and feedback from families is that young people look forward to going to the home and benefit considerably from the experience. All other outcomes areas are judged as good.

There is a wide range of social and leisure activities provided and participation in these provides an excellent opportunity for young people to develop self-confidence and social skills, in addition to having an enjoyable time.

Staff and managers are committed to achieving good outcomes for young people and are ambitious about improving the quality of care. They are very skilled at communicating with each of the young people and have a detailed understanding of their individual needs and how they are to be met. The manager provides clear leadership and direction and is well supported by the Responsible Individual.

The one recommendation arising from the previous inspection is effectively addressed. At this inspection, one statutory requirement and three good practice

recommendations were made. These relate to the monitoring of the quality of the service, staff annual appraisals, the audit of files and records and notification of significant events.

Parents and professionals say this is a good service, with a positive approach to resolving any issues that arise. One comment described the service as 'Invaluable'.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This short breaks service offers care and accommodation for up to eight children who have a learning and/or physical disability. The service is situated on the first floor of a school campus on the outskirts of a large city.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/10/2013	Interim	good progress
07/05/2013	Full	good

### What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

#### 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
33 (2001)	ensure the person carrying out the visit shall interview, 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. (Regulation 33 (4) (a)).	01/10/2014

#### Recommendations

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

- ensure all staff have their performance individually and formally appraised

at least annually and this appraisal takes into account any views of children the service is providing for. (NMS 19.6)

- ensure the manager regularly monitors, in line with regulations, all records kept by the home to ensure compliance with the home's policies, namely that all records are signed and dated by the person making the entry. (NMS 21.2)
- ensure the registered person has a system in place to notify within 24 hours the persons and appropriate authorities of the occurrence of significant events in accordance with Regulation 30. The system includes what to do where a notifiable event arises at weekends.(NMS 24.1).

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people continue to benefit from receiving this short break service. Some parents describe the service as 'invaluable'. Staff and managers are highly committed to achieving positive outcomes for young people. Young people are skilfully supported in gaining skills in making choices and being actively engaged in decision making. For example staff make excellent use of their knowledge of individual young people and their specific means of communicating their views and wishes. As a result young people develop greater self-confidence and are able to participate in a wide range of leisure and social activities, with evident pleasure and enthusiasm.

Young people benefit from the established relationships that have developed in some cases over a number of years; there is a clear bond between some young people and staff which is a strength of this service. Young people are happy and relaxed; their families say they are confident that they are safely looked after.

Staff are very aware of the need to promote young people's safety and are extremely sensitive to any changes in young people's demeanour that may indicate they are unhappy or distressed. Any concerns are appropriately referred to senior staff and followed up speedily and appropriately.

Young people's health needs are well recorded and responded to. There is a registered nurse on duty at all times and care staff receive training and supervision in meeting young people's health needs from the nursing team. The service has good links with other health professionals, some of whom are located on the adjacent school site. Staff support young people's parents in ensuring that their wishes are followed in conjunction with individual health plans for each young person.

The home and school staff teams liaise closely with regular staff handovers. They have developed joint strategies of working with young people and setting consistent targets and expectations for each young person. Key workers and managers attend annual education reviews and support young people with any school work that they may bring back to the home from school. As a short break service, parents retain the primary role in liaising with school; however staff will assist parents in that role where it may be required. Young people all attend full time education either in the school on the same site or in a number of other schools in the area. School attendance is good.

### Quality of care

**outstanding**

Young people are very clearly placed at the centre of staff and managers practice. Staff display high levels of expertise in communicating with young people and seeking to gain their views, wishes and preferences. Strong effective relationships develop between young people and staff. Clear bonds develop between staff and young people; they thrive in this trusting environment. Young people increase in self-confidence as a result of having short breaks in this service and are better able to form friendships with other people of their age and participate in a wide range of social, leisure and sports activities.

Staff have high aspirations for young people and seek to enable them to maximise and increase their potential. All achievements are recognised and celebrated. Parents and professionals comment positively on the degree of progress young people make. Recently a group went camping in a safe and controlled environment, providing the opportunity to experience an exciting and fun activity which they were able to share with staff and other young people. This is a significant achievement for those young people. Individual goals are set for each young person; these are set in accordance with individual needs and within the scope of the placement plan. Each target set are designed to develop the range of skills of each young person. These goals are shared with school and are a major contribution toward developing social skills and confidence. Young people enjoy the recognition of their achievements.

The home is purpose built and is modern and extremely well equipped. The location on the first floor of a large multi-disciplinary site is not ideal; however the manager is pro-active in decorating the home in bright colours that are chosen by the young people. There are numerous works of art by the young people and photos and posters displayed on the walls and in bedrooms. Each bedroom is personalised for each young person when they come to stay. Safety of young people in the building is a high priority. There is good security, appropriate to vulnerable young people's needs, and the home liaises closely with the facilities managers to ensure there are robust safety systems in place including emergency evacuation procedures. The home is decorated and maintained to a high standard. There are excellent facilities within the multi-disciplinary site that are accessible to young people, such as a hydrotherapy pool, sensory rooms, physiotherapy and soft play areas.

Young people's preferences are very well understood by this staff. Their views and wishes are sought by consultation with families, the use of picture cards, symbols, gestures and careful observation. Young people can select their meals from a menu and enjoy their meals whilst staying at the home. Some young people enjoy assisting in the preparation of meals.

Young people's health needs are strongly promoted whilst staying at the home. As a short break service, parents retain the primary responsibility for children's health, however staff offer any advice support or guidance that may be necessary. Many children who visit the home have highly complex health needs, there is a registered nurse on duty at all times. All staff receive training in the administration of medicines. Nursing staff are responsible for the administration and safe storage of medicines.

Currently a new system of recording and transferring information regarding the health needs of each child between changing shifts is being introduced. This demonstrates a pro-active approach to reducing the potential for any errors occurring. Both nursing and care staff receive regular training in increasing their awareness of specific medical conditions, such as epilepsy awareness. Staff consult regularly with other health professionals and a wide range of specialist services are made available to young people who come to the home.

Young people are encouraged to participate in a wide range of leisure and social activities. These include activities such as eating out, visiting local attractions and leisure facilities. Staff are skilful at using these activities to develop social confidence and awareness of developing friendships and interest groups. Staff are creative in seeking ways to broaden young people's social experiences and interests. They are excellent at recording these events and sharing the experience by displaying the photos within the home and in children's records.

Staff are enthusiastic and energetic in promoting excellent quality care for each young person. The interaction between staff and young people is dynamic and positive and as a result young people thrive in this environment. Both families and professional comment on the excellent quality of care provided in this home. Young people are happy relaxed and clearly enjoy the time spent in the home. Not all young people are able to raise a complaint, however parents say that the home is open and transparent and addresses concern raised in an appropriate manner, seeking to prevent repeats of the same concerns. All say they believe their young people are well looked after in this home, and they would indicate any concerns to their parents if they had them. They all look forward to their visits to the home.

### **Keeping children and young people safe    good**

Young people's safety is a high priority in this home. Staff are very aware of the need to promote the safety of highly vulnerable young people with highly complex needs. There are robust safeguarding procedures in place that are known and understood by staff. Parents comment that they leave their young people at the home, confident in the knowledge that they will be looked after safely. Professionals also comment on the staff ability to maintain the safety of young people.

All staff receive regular safeguarding awareness training and are diligent and sensitive in observing any signs of distress and both physical and emotional well-being. Any concerns are passed on to responsible managers who liaise regularly with the appropriate agencies, and take appropriate action. Staff are aware of how to make an individual referral to safeguarding agencies should they consider it necessary. The manager regularly attends liaison meetings and is a member of the safeguarding management group. Sensitive vigilance by staff was observed during the course of the inspection. Young people benefit from the staff observing good well established safe care practice in the home. Staff are very skilled in understanding

each young person's method of communicating any signs of unhappiness or distress.

No young people have been absent from the home, however the home has appropriate protocols in place and liaises with the local police should such an event ever occur.

The staff make good use of risk assessments to promote the safety of young people, these include, individual impact risk assessments, used when assessing whether the service is able to safely meet the needs of young people and ensure appropriate matching of young people.

There are positive approaches to managing young people's behaviour that are rooted in praise and recognition. As a result, the use of any sanctions is rare, where these are necessary they are appropriate and well recorded, however not all entries are routinely signed as being monitored and commented on by managers.

Any concerns regarding the possible safety of young people are openly referred to appropriate agencies to be investigated. Notifications of significant incidents are mostly made efficiently and in a timely manner, however in one case an oversight led to delay in a notification being made, the manager has subsequently addressed this.

Staff recruitment practice is robust and no staff start work before all statutory checks are satisfactorily completed. Confirmation of agency staff recruitment records is sought, though not held on site, similarly, staff recruited by the property management company who own the site are not held in the home, however their manager also sits on the site safeguarding group and is aware of the recruitment standard. He has agreed to make his records available to the Registered Manager.

The physical safety of the premises is good, there are regular health and safety checks conducted by the site management company. All equipment and the premises are well maintained, the home makes extensive use of risk assessments for the building, equipment, activities and individuals. The home has a good track record in safe risk management, not risk aversion. As a result, young people benefit from being able to undertake a range of activities in a safe, well managed environment.

## **Leadership and management**

**good**

The home is well managed and the staff are provided with clear leadership and direction. Staff say they are well supported and trained. Managers are committed to improving the quality of care and achieve good outcomes for young people.

The Registered Manager holds a diploma in Leadership and Management in Social Care at level 5, she also holds National Vocational Qualification in Health and Social Care at levels 3 and 4 and an assessors award. She has 13 years' experience of working in residential settings for children with disabilities; 4 years as a manager.

The manager is well supported by her line manager and receives regular supervision. She is also well supported by two deputy managers and a highly motivated staff team. The home is sufficiently staffed to meet the highly individual needs of the young people, staff stability and retention is good, allowing effective relationships to develop between young people, their families and staff. The use of external agency staff has reduced since the last inspection.

There are no complaints since the last inspection recorded in the complaint records. However, staff are very skilled at understanding how each young person communicates their feelings and are sensitive to their emotional and physical wellbeing. Feedback from parents and professionals indicates an open and positive response to any concerns; as a result most differences are able to be resolved without the need to raise a formal complaint. For example, concerns regarding communication between school and home staff and appropriate issuing of some medicines have been appropriately responded to.

The quality of the service is regularly monitored by the managers, however, not all reports of visits by independent visitors under Regulation 33 show evidence of robust attempts to consult with young people, their parents or other relevant professionals. Some information in the reports appears to be contradictory.

The home has a good track record of addressing any areas for development identified in previous inspection reports and through internal monitoring. Records are well maintained, relevant and up to date. They are stored securely and staff are very aware of the need to promote confidentiality. All placement plans have been reviewed and revised. At the previous inspection one good practice concerning ensuring that young people's placement plans contained current up-to-date information. These records have been reviewed and the recommendation is now effectively addressed. However, despite regular audit, not all records were signed off as appropriately completed.

Managers and leaders have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the service and there is a detailed service improvement plan in place, which outlines clear objectives and timescales for completion.

The manager is very pro-active in monitoring that all planned appointments take place; for example, social work visits within statutory timescales. The home liaises regularly with local social work teams and managers; communication is good. As a result, the frequency of social visits has improved, however the identification of appropriate resources for young people to move on to as they become adult can take some time. The home is pro-active in promoting transition planning, though not always invited to attend those meetings.

Staff are well trained, supervised and supported. There is good management succession training, however, not all staff have received an annual appraisal in the last 12 months.

Notifications of significant events, are usually made promptly to the appropriate agencies, however, of one occasion there was a significant delay as a result of an oversight.

## What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
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.

## Information 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 framework of inspection for children's homes.

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