

1241840

Registered provider: Wessex College Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private provider and offers care for up to four children. The provider states in their statement of purpose that they provide care for children and young people with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties. At the time of inspection four children were living at the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since January 2022.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 August 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 12 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/01/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
15/06/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
24/02/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/09/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Outcomes for children are good, and children are making progress. This includes a reduction in incidents of self-harm, substance misuse and going missing from the home. In addition, children's independence skills and engagement in school have increased. One child has moved into semi-independent living and two other children are preparing to take this next step. Timescales for these moves are managed at a pace to meet the needs and levels of support each child requires.

Children benefit from having strong, trusting and nurturing relationships with staff. They feel that staff really care for them, seek and listen to their views and opinions, and want the best for them. The children like living at the home. They do view it as their home and are proud of it. Children said there can sometimes be tension between the older and younger children, but they feel that staff manage it well. One child said that it is the same as you feel sometimes living with a younger brother.

Care and support plans are of a good quality. They provide clear guidance for staff on how to meet the child's needs. These plans are frequently reviewed and updated to ensure they reflect each child's current needs. Within these plans there is clear evidence of the child's input. Staff see this as key to developing the child's understanding of their situation, ownership over their present and future, and develop self-management and care strategies.

Children's healthcare needs are well met. Staff advocate for children effectively to ensure they received additional health support when needed and help them to attend these appointments. The outcome of this has been an improvement in children's self-esteem, social skills and self-confidence.

Children attend a range of educational provisions to meet their individual needs. Some children have recently been taking exams, and they are now awaiting their results. Staff supported the children through their exams and helped them to create and follow revision timetables. Staff are aspirational for the children in their care. They are very proud of the children's educational attainments and celebrate these.

Staff support children to keep in touch and spend time with their family and friends. Parents spoken to are very positive about the home and the care provided.

Staff provide children with a comfortable, well-furnished home. This is personalised by and for the children who live there. However, the use of locks on doors is excessive and takes away from the homely environment the staff have created.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Children feel safe at the home. All of them are confident that they can talk with staff and managers if they have any concerns or worries. Staff have a good

understanding of safeguarding procedures and implement them effectively in practice. Staff work collaboratively with other professionals to protect children. Records of safeguarding events are suitably documented.

Behaviour is managed appropriately. Detailed behaviour support plans reflect children's current behavioural needs and how staff are to meet them. There have been occasions when the police have been appropriately called to the home for safety reasons. However, on one occasion this was to manage a child's behaviour. The manager identified that this was not appropriate and took action to address this. Restraint is rarely used.

Risk is well managed. Risk assessments are clear and provide guidance for staff to help them to keep children safe. Staff are not risk-averse and work with children to understand and manage risk.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is experienced and appropriately qualified for their role. They have a good understanding of the strengths of the home and the areas for development. They have high aspirations for the children and the staff team, which are reflected in their clear vision for the home. This approach is driving the progress the home has made and there are clear plans in place for its future development. Staff, parents and professionals are very positive about the manager's leadership, and they find her supportive and approachable.

The manager and the senior manager have effective monitoring systems in place to review the quality of care. Information from monitoring is used to further develop the home and the staff team.

The requirement from the previous inspection has been met, resulting in a new bathroom being installed.

Information about safeguarding events is stored across several different areas. This does not make tracking and monitoring of safeguarding records as easy as they could be.

Staff training is of a good standard. There is clear evidence of staff receiving additional training to meet their individual training needs and the needs of the children. New staff receive an appropriate induction which prepares them well for their role.

Staff supervisions are of a good quality. Supervisions provide an opportunity for staff to reflect on their practice and well-being and review their training needs. Each supervision record has a clear action plan which is reviewed at the next session.

The current children's guide provides a lot of useful information for the children moving into and living at the home. However, the document does not accurately reflect information about the current staff team.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's guide is reviewed and updated to reflect the current staff team. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 23, paragraph 4.21)
- The registered person should review the excessive use of locks to ensure they provide the children with a homely and domestic environment rather than an 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that electronic records are easily accessible and that systems to store safeguarding records are streamlined. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1241840

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Wessex College Limited

Registered provider address: Acorn Norfolk Limited, Atria, Spa Road, Bolton BL1 4AG

Responsible individual: Samantha Choules

Registered manager: Lucy Yard

Inspector

Wendy Anderson, Social Care Inspector

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