

1255823

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to four children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 17 June 2017.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 25 August 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/08/2021	Full	Good
04/12/2019	Full	Good
25/09/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make progress relevant to their experiences, needs and time spent in the home. They enjoy nurturing relationships with the staff and are free to express their emotions and worries, in the confidence that staff will understand the underlying messages and take action to try and help them. A placing social worker said, 'There are trusting relationships between the children and the staff.'

The home is decorated to a good standard and feels homely and welcoming. The home has sufficient space for children to spend time out of their bedrooms by themselves or in the company of others, and there is ample seating for children and staff to enjoy a meal together if they wish. Staff encourage children to grow their own vegetables and help with the development of the small sensory patch in the back garden. This helps children feel part of their home and gives them a sense of belonging.

Staff encourage children to attend education every day and some children have made progress with their attendance and participation. One child recently sat their GCSEs, while another child is planning to start a level one fishery course at college. When children choose not to go to school, or are transitioning between schools, staff provide home-learning materials and educational resources to engage them. In-house tutors are also provided to strengthen and support the children's vocational skills.

Children have good access to local health services and specialists. Staff refer children to these specialist services when there is a pattern of behaviour or concerns arise around children's abilities to make safe judgments. These referrals provide staff with additional strategies to meet the children's needs, and means the children are further protected by qualified experts.

Staff regularly take photos of children enjoying new experiences and participating in meaningful activities. Staff lovingly create photo albums and affirmation books to remind children of the things that make them happy. Staff share these with children when they notice they are feeling low or have had a bad day. This reinforces the good in the children's lives and helps promote their emotional well-being.

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

The staff team has a good understanding of the children's strengths and vulnerabilities. Staff support and encourage children to explore teenage friendships and relationships. They also support children in developing their understanding of healthy relationships and potential risks through key-work sessions, reflection and open conversations. This helps children to increase their awareness of risk for themselves.

Staff work collaboratively with police to maintain safe monitoring of children when they are missing from home. Staff contact police liaison officers when new risks for children emerge, and the home's location risk assessment is up to date on localised risks and trends. This enables staff to keep their knowledge fresh and be intuitive to any patterns involved in children going missing from home. A police officer said, 'The children's home share intelligence and information with the police when the situation arises.'

Children's care planning documents are responsive and reflective of children's presenting needs. All staff have recently had anti-ligature and autism awareness training to help meet and support the needs of a child. However, not all staff were happy with the quality of one course and did not get the opportunity to feed this back to the external provider. This is a missed opportunity for senior leaders to use this information to improve and reflect on the quality of training they provide for staff.

Overall, the registered manager provides good written risk assessments, with clear strategies for staff to help support children in managing risk. However, on one occasion, a child's safety management plan was ineffective. For instance, the plan was not clear about on-call supporting managers and staff strategies for reducing risks were not practical. This resulted in a reliance on off-duty staff to attend the home should a physical intervention be needed for one child.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The quality of assessing children's risks and needs alongside those of the other children living in the home is variable, as is staff training. This means the protective measures and strategies for the staff to follow are not always known from the beginning. This is a missed opportunity for the staff to be clear in their approaches, and for leaders to demonstrate that staff have all the necessary skills to support the needs of children before they move in.

On one occasion, a risk assessment for one child was not reviewed by senior managers after an incident. Soon after, a second significant incident occurred over a bank holiday weekend. The lack of review meant on-call managers were unaware of emerging risks and subsequently gave staff unsafe advice. This omission did not impact on the quality of care provided to the children but did have an effect on the emotional well-being of some staff.

Children's plans have clear and consistent boundaries for staff to follow. These are reviewed and agreed in team meetings, professional discussions and in consultation with the children. However, some staff say that at times they feel undermined by additional decisions made by the registered manager. This has affected staff morale and some of the positive relationships between children and staff.

The registered manager responds to children's complaints promptly. They ensure investigations are completed in a timely way and immediate issues are resolved.

However, it is not clear how this information is fed back to children, and whether they are happy with the outcome of their complaint. This means children may feel that their concerns have gone unheard and therefore unresolved.

The long-standing staff team is experienced and qualified. They use their knowledge and skills to regularly review children's progress in accordance with their targets. This means all areas of children's lives are captured and systematically reported on, contributing to a well-informed professional network. Even through difficulties, the staff team has maintained these high standards.

Staff receive regular and reflective supervision. Line managers review staff professional development targets, and many staff have additional responsibilities to suit their strengths and abilities. This promotes teamwork and identifies new learning opportunities. Staff say that they feel supported through supervision and most staff say they are able to be honest and open with their line managers.

The registered manager has met all the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v))	1 October 2022
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose. ensure that staff work as a team; and understands the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(f))	1 October 2022
The care planning standard is that children—	1 October 2022

receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home;

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—

that arrangements are in place to—

manage and review the placement of each child in the home.
(Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(b)(ii))

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.1)
- The registered person should encourage children to share any concerns about their care or other matters as soon as they arise. In particular, the registered manager should ensure children are informed of the outcome and any subsequent actions following their complaints. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.13)

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: 1255823

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Registered provider address: Hampshire Council, 3rd Floor, Elizabeth II Court North, The Castle, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG

Responsible individual: John Stacey

Registered manager: Kerry Pringle

Inspector

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector

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