

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 for up to five children who experience emotional and behavioural difficulties. At the time of the inspection, there were four children living in the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since June 2017.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 August 2023

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: 14 June 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/06/2022	Full	Good
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 experience well-planned care from staff who are committed to building and maintaining positive relationships with them. This makes children feel secure and cared for, which enables them to make good progress.

Staff understand and implement children's care and support plans. When children require specialist intervention in relation to their physical or mental health needs, staff and managers seek advice without delay. One child has made particularly significant progress in relation to their emotional well-being because they have learned how to cope and express their feelings.

Staff support children to choose school placements and college courses which give them the greatest chance of success. Managers and staff have ambition for children, and they help them to identify and achieve their personal goals.

Proactive steps are taken to work with children's families to ensure continuity of care. Parents speak very highly of the way managers and staff work collaboratively with them.

There is a strong ethos of supporting children to celebrate being who they want to be. Children are sensitively supported to understand more about their sexuality. An inclusive culture, which promotes equality and diversity, enables children to explore their developing sense of identity.

Children are genuinely encouraged to feel this is their home. The children are empowered to have ownership, for example, by having friends to stay over and having their own pets to care for.

Children have a wide range of social and recreational experiences. At the time of the inspection, two children had recently returned from a foreign holiday with staff. The other two children had enjoyed a short break with staff, one along with their family, and the other with a friend.

Some children are struggling to live together harmoniously. Managers recognise the negative impact that this is having on other children. They are taking steps to reach a resolution which avoids an unplanned ending for any child.

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

Staff prioritise children's safety and well-being. They respond promptly when children go missing from the home. Staff follow children's individualised plans that describe the steps to take to ensure that children are returned home safely. Staff work well with the police and external safeguarding professionals. They share information about children's behaviour and known contacts during episodes of

children being missing. When children return home, they are offered nurturing care, which contributes to their sense of security.

Staff show intuition and curiosity when they are speaking to children about safeguarding concerns. This supports the development of open and transparent relationships with children. Consequently, children consistently demonstrate that they are willing to seek out staff for support and advice about how to keep themselves safe.

Children's risks reduce over time because staff understand children's individual strengths and vulnerabilities. There are clear strategies in written plans which reliably inform staff how to keep children safe. In one example, creative use is being made of a child protection plan to ensure effective multi-agency monitoring.

Managers and staff work together with neighbours and local organisations, which helps to give children a sense of pride in being part of the local community. A carefully planned restorative response to some incidents involving children in the local convenience store has prevented them being criminalised.

Staff are fully informed about the therapeutic model which is embedded in the culture of the home. Staff bear in mind children's individual experiences. This promotes a restorative approach which supports children to have a positive experience of learning how to make amends for their mistakes. However, some children and staff struggle to recognise the wider benefits of this approach and feel that there could be more clarity about consequences for behavioural incidents.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is passionate in her efforts to be a good role model and a trusted figure for the children and the staff. She told inspectors, 'Every single conversation staff have with children is significant.'

Staff are positive about working in the home and are sharply focused on improving children's lives. They say that they feel well supported by managers. They benefit from regular, reflective supervision and good-quality training.

Managers understand the importance of working in partnership with other professionals. They keep other professionals fully informed about children's progress. Managers proactively advocate for children and challenge decisions made by other professionals when they believe those decisions are not made with children's best interests in mind.

Staff work together well as a team. They make good use of the information-sharing systems in place, such as daily handovers and shift-planning meetings. As a result, staff have up-to-date knowledge of children's current needs, and they can make sound decisions to ensure that children receive consistent and predictable support.

Managers have recognised that the recording systems could be more streamlined and are taking steps to address this with the introduction of a new electronic recording system. One staff member spoke positively about this change. They said that, at times, the complexity of the current system makes completing paperwork time-consuming, which can have a negative impact on time spent with children.

Children know how to make a complaint if they are unhappy about any aspect of their care. Complaints are taken seriously and children receive feedback about how complaints have been investigated, and the outcome. However, records do not demonstrate that children are offered the opportunity to escalate their concerns to external agencies if they are unhappy about the outcome of their complaint.

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, The 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 registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39 (2)) Specifically, the registered person should ensure that children are offered the opportunity to escalate their concerns to external agencies if they are unhappy about the outcome of their complaint.	23 November 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should demonstrate a fair and balanced approach in relation to behaviour standards in the home. This should include proportionate and natural consequences for children when their behaviour falls below required expectations. Children should be included in agreeing natural consequences to promote fairness and equality in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.11)

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

Inspectors

Ashley Edwards, Social Care Inspector

Helen Simmons, Social Care Regulatory Inspection Manager

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