

1257065

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and run by a local authority. It provides care for up to five children with social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection three children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2024.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 April 2026

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: 6 May 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/05/2025	Full	Good
30/04/2024	Full	Good
05/06/2023	Full	Good
25/01/2023	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Children have positive experiences due to a resilient, caring staff that promotes trust, independence, education, and relationship-building. Staff effectively support childrens health, emotional wellbeing, and promote positive behaviour, working closely with external agencies.

Moves into the home are well planned, and children benefit from a safe, welcoming environment. The commitment of the staff has mitigated staffing vacancies. Leadership is stable and oversight is strong, staff are well trained, and professional feedback is positive.

However, inspectors identified a lack of storage for childrens belonging, delays in reporting children missing, and insufficient scrutiny in independent monitoring reports.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have positive experiences because of the commitment of a caring staff. Children have frequent opportunities to have fun with staff and each other. Staff understand how childrens experiences can affect their ability to form trusting relationships and they are skilled at getting to know new children.

Children are encouraged to grow their independence skills. One child said that their favourite thing about living in the home was the trust that they have been given in using equipment in the kitchen to prepare their own meals. Another child has started to manage their own medication when they are staying away from the home.

Most children are enrolled in education which is best suited to their needs. Staff help children to gain their qualifications by working with schools to overcome barriers to their attendance to lessons. When children arrive at the home without school placements, managers listen to children's views about their education and work closely with professionals find ways to help children achieve their ambitions, whilst also helping them back into school as quickly as possible. School staff provided positive feedback about the quality of communication they receive from staff.

Staff help children to build and maintain relationships with their families and others who are important to them. Staff offer advice and a safe space for children to express their views and feelings, whilst advocating for them to have visits with previous carers when this is appropriate. This has meant that children have been able to keep in touch with those that they care about.

Children who move into the home experience well planned moves. Children are involved in decisions about how and when they move and their preferences are incorporated into planning. Children have opportunities to visit and meet staff and other children before

they move in, which helps them to settle quickly. Staff work flexibly to accommodate children faster than originally planned when this is in their best interests.

The home is generally well maintained and provides a positive environment for children to grow up, with plenty of space, games and resources available for them to have fun and relax. Children's bedrooms are decorated in line with their wishes and staff help children to keep them clean and tidy. However, one child still had belongings in suitcases two months after moving into the home because of a lack of available storage. Managers took action to address this during the inspection.

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

Staff talk to children about the relevant risks when there are concerns that they have used illegal substances. They seek appropriate medical advice when this is required and work closely with professional support services to ensure that children have access to the help they need to make healthier choices.

Medication is well managed. Staff receive regular training and there are clear systems for administering medication to children which helps to prevent risk of errors taking place. When errors do occur, frequent auditing allows these to be identified promptly, and appropriate medical checks have taken place. Learning is identified and shared with the wider team to minimise the likelihood of a repeated error.

When children experience feelings which lead to them harming themselves, staff responding in a nurturing way, offering appropriate medical care. They talk to them about their feelings and make referrals to mental health specialists when this is needed. On occasions when managers have not been satisfied with the response from other services, the advocate strongly to make sure that children have access to the help they need.

Children's positive behaviour is promoted and celebrated through the use of a 'Proud Board', which displays children's achievements. Children also receive spontaneous rewards and are incentivised to meet goals through individualised rewards such as extra activities. For example, one child chose to have their nails done after improving their attendance at school. When staff use consequences to discourage specific behaviour, they focus on helping children to understand the effect of their behaviour on others by talking to them and through restorative actions, such as helping repair damage.

Staff work closely with the police and specialist safeguarding agencies such as exploitation workers to better understand and reduce the risks that children experience when they are missing from the home. There are clear protocols in place which detail the actions that staff should take when children are missing. However, managers have not always identified when staff have not reported children missing within the stated timescales. This affects the ability of the police to respond and means that opportunities to locate children more quickly may be missed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a qualified and experienced registered manager. They use a range of monitoring systems to effectively oversee the quality of care in the home. As a result, they understand the progress that children are making and have identified and addressed areas of weakness. However, the reports produced by the independent person continue to lack scrutiny and this has not been adequately addressed by the manager.

The registered manager is working with senior leaders and the wider local authority to improve permanent staffing levels. There is a high frequency of agency staffing to ensure there are sufficient staff meet childrens needs following recent sickness and increased staffing needs. This has affected the morale of the permanent staff team, who are taking on additional responsibilities and working extra hours to mitigate the effect on children. Consistency for children is maintained with the use of familiar agency staff, high quality inductions and informative shift handovers. This means that temporary staff understand important information about each childs most needs and how best to help them.

Staff say they receive regular supervision and use the opportunities to understand how they can improve in their roles. Staff have received the training required to meet the needs of children in their care. They have completed additional courses to when there are emerging needs, and they attend regular refresher training to ensure that their knowledge and practice is up to date.

There is a reflective culture within the staff team. Frequent team meetings team meetings offer opportunities to share learning, while consultation with therapeutic specialists provide opportunities to review the effectiveness of strategies. This has resulted in staff helping one child to better manage their feelings.

Feedback from professionals is consistently positive about the support and communication that they receive from staff and managers. One specialist police worker said that staff are extremely helpful and support the police by gathering important information relating to potential exploitation of children, and that this has helped not only police but partner agencies.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the independent person's report demonstrates a rigorous assessment of the arrangements of the home for safeguarding and promoting children's welfare. Reports should reflect sufficient scrutiny of the quality of the practice observed, the records that have been reviewed and the discussions that have been held with children, families and others in order to provide an objective assessment. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff consistently follow the home's policies and procedures for the benefit of the children in the home's care. Specifically, managers should review the effectiveness of the staff response when children are missing from home so they can identify when staff have not followed procedures for reporting children missing and take any necessary action in response. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20)
- The registered person should ensure that the children are provided with appropriate furniture to store personal items and clothing when moving into the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.19)

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: 1257065

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Registered provider address: Hampshire County Council, The Castle, Winchester, SO23 8UG

Responsible individual: Deborah Price

Registered manager: Warren Beadell

Inspector

Glen Strowbridge, Social Care Inspector

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