

1259734

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Assurance 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 four children who experience social and emotional difficulties. At the time of this inspection, there was one child living in the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since July 2024.

Inspection date: 23 April 2025

Date of last inspection: 27 August 2024

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspections, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We identified serious concerns in relation to the care and protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Leaders and managers have not taken effective action to meet previous regulatory shortfalls. Consequently, care planning decisions have not supported children to make positive progress. In addition, children are not always kept safe or protected from harm.

Since moving to the home, the child has been persistently missing from care and continues to be at risk from unsafe individuals while out in the community.

The care plan for the child outlines restrictions on the child to promote their safety and protect them from harm. Despite this, staff are not providing the support required to meet the child's identified needs. Risk reduction strategies are not consistently implemented and the actions that staff take do not always keep the child safe.

There are several examples of poor safeguarding practice from staff. These include avoidable delays before room searches take place, failing to follow the child's missing-from-home protocol and staff not taking effective action to minimise the likelihood of the child leaving the home. This means that identified risks are not fully understood or well managed.

Communication between leaders, managers and other professionals is not wholly effective. In one example, there was not enough consideration given to the capacity of the staff team to carry out agreed actions to restrict the child's liberty when this was needed to keep them safe. This has undermined staff confidence and led to significant discrepancies between the care that the child requires and the care that they receive.

Staff have built effective relationships with the local police and good communication sharing has helped to provide a clearer understanding of the child's whereabouts when they are missing from home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/08/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
02/11/2022	Full	Good
20/07/2022	Full	Inadequate
16/08/2021	Full	Good

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 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— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation (12) (1) (2)(a)(i)(iv)(v)(vi)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all staff act immediately when children may be at risk of harm, and consistently carry out the actions required of them to keep children safe, in accordance with the children's individual plans. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	24 April 2025
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home.	8 May 2025

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

that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose;

that arrangements are in place to—

manage and review the placement of each child in the home.

that the child's placing authority is contacted, and a review of that child's relevant plans is requested, if—

the registered person considers that the child is at risk of harm or has concerns that the care provided for the child is inadequate to meet the child's needs;

the child is, or has been, persistently absent from the home without permission.

(Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(a)(b)(ii)(e)(i)(ii))

This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1259734

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: Maddison Taylor

Inspector

Ashley Edwards, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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