

2571846

New Forest Care

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home's statement of purpose describes the service as one that will provide short-term placements for children, aged eight to 18, experiencing placement breakdowns, those with emerging complex behaviours that have been too challenging for previous placements, and those at risk from child sexual exploitation, gangs, criminality, at risk in the community or posing a risk to others.

The home registered with Ofsted in June 2020 for five children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

There has been no registered manager since September 2020.

Inspection date: 26 November 2020

This monitoring visit

This monitoring visit took place due to concerns arising from recent safeguarding notifications and the independent visitor's reports, submitted to Ofsted by the provider. The visit was also used to follow-up on issues raised at the registration visit and to test if the home is operating within its statement of purpose.

Following the home becoming registered with Ofsted in June 2020, the registered manager left on 31 August 2020. A new manager has been appointed, but he has not yet submitted a completed registration application to Ofsted. Consequently, his fitness for the role remains untested by the regulator.

Some of the children have made progress during their short period in the home. For example, a significant reduction in missing from care episodes, and learning to manage their own behaviour, therefore not needing to be physically restrained. Staff records of incidents involving physical restraint are clear, showing what happened and why staff took the actions they did. Another progress example includes children taking greater responsibility for their own personal care.

According to the statement of purpose, and the home's intended care model, children may stay in a range of accommodation under the home's registration. This includes an outreach property and activity centres for specific and focused support. The intention is that the children will live in the main house as soon as they are able, and is demonstrated by each child having a designated bedroom throughout their placement. However, some of these bedrooms have been used as 'sleep-in' rooms for the staff while the children are accessing the other accommodation. This practice undermines the home's ethos and gives the wrong message to children about ownership of their bedrooms.

The manager's decision to admit children is not always fully considered in terms of a child's compatibility with the current group, for example by the admission of a combination of children with very different needs, such as being at risk of child sexual exploitation and being at risk of sexually harmful behaviour. The potential risk of harm is high should these children, who are currently using the additional accommodation, move into the main house at the same time. The manager has no clear plans for this scenario. The absence of explicitly clear care planning in such cases presents the risk of children being placed in different aspects of the overall accommodation for logistical reasons, as opposed to their individual care needs. Some staff do not fully understand the reasons why the children are accommodated. They demonstrate a poor knowledge of the placement plan and, in some cases, a deprivation of liberty order.

The quality of the various premises used by the provider is variable and, in some cases, not suitably risk assessed. Staff reported a near miss of running out of electricity in the outreach provision because their ability to top up the meter is cumbersome. Staff are unsure of the fire precautions in this building and say that there has not been a trial fire evacuation.

Robust risk assessment is not always evident when activity accommodation is used, for example the potential risk of unknown adults using the same site. In another example, a child needs to use the laundry facilities in a cabin that is being used by children from another of the provider's homes. The potential risks of the contact between these children have not been considered.

Despite the clear mechanisms that are in place for the provision and monitoring of the children's educational needs, the staff are not using these consistently. From the records seen, personal education plans contain little detail with no challenge from staff, and it is not always possible to be assured that all of the children are receiving the amount of dedicated educational time that they are entitled to.

The provider is unable to demonstrate that the children are receiving care and support from suitably trained and qualified staff. Some staff have limited previous residential care experience and have not received training in the areas described in the statement of purpose, such as child sexual exploitation, childhood trauma and

complex behaviours. However, these staff are given the responsibility to care for children away from the main house for significant periods of time.

Communication is sometimes compromised by the current staffing arrangements of having separate teams that do not come together for staff meetings. The limited time available for handovers risks information not being shared. In one example, the reason why a fire door had been removed was not passed on. In another example, a child's inhaler was not taken to school and this went undetected. The manager has not addressed the division between the teams, despite the independent visitor raising this concern.

Senior leaders have not followed up on recommendations made by Ofsted, following the registration process. The safeguarding policy does not state how children will be protected in the event that they may make an allegation about a staff member. It is unclear how and when 'repair and rebuild' sessions are held to reform relationships between the children and staff once the necessary investigations are complete.

Senior leaders have let a culture evolve where staff use their personal mobile phones for work purposes. They have not considered the safeguarding issues and consequently there is no policy or guidance in place. Key staff do keep records of allegations that demonstrate the appropriate process has been followed, including referrals to the designated officer for safeguarding in the local authority.

Staff demonstrate a good response when children go missing from care. They work with other agencies such as the police to affect a safe return of the child as soon as possible.

Recent inspection history

First visit after registration.

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 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 where appropriate. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b))	15/01/2021
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement. (Regulation 8 (1)(2)(a)(i)(vi))	15/01/2021
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.	15/01/2021

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c))	
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— that the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(c))	15/01/2021
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home paragraph (1) does not apply; and the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(a)(b))	15/01/2021
The registered person must keep under review and, as necessary, revise the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 34 (6))	15/01/2021
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1)(2))	15/01/2021
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a))	15/01/2021

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2571846

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: New Forest Care

Registered provider address: New Forest Care Ltd, West Shore House, West Street, Hythe, Southampton, Hampshire SO45 6AA

Responsible individual: Anthony Mostran

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Keith Riley, social care inspector

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