

2588486

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

The home is registered for up to three children. It provides care for children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a private provider which has four other homes in the area.

This new home and the manager were registered with Ofsted on 5 May 2020.

Visit dates: 16 to 17 September 2020

Previous inspection date: Not previously inspected

Previous inspection judgement: Not previously inspected

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

Following a challenging time between May and mid-August 2020, a decision was made by senior leaders to temporarily close the home for a period of reflection and review. From when it first opened and until its temporary closure, the home offered crisis provision. This provision was difficult to manage and despite staff working hard, two children's needs could not be met, and they had to move from the home. The conclusion of the multidisciplinary review was to change the purpose of the home to provide long-term care.

Currently, there are two children living at the home, both of whom have very recently moved in. Staff are developing good relationships with the children but acknowledge that it is still early days. One child said that they are very happy at the home, commenting that 'it's great here'. They feel that staff keep them safe and look after them really well.

Staff understand the needs of the children currently living at the home and how they will meet these needs. However, the children's placement plans do not fully support this work as they do not provide clear guidance for staff, which could potentially lead to inconsistency in the provision of care. In contrast, children's pre-placement plans are very detailed.

One child is in full-time education and a school is being sought for the other child. In-house education is being provided as an interim measure. Staff were seen to welcome children back home from school and activities and show an interest in their day.

Staff ensure that children's physical and mental health needs are met. They advocate well for the children to obtain any additional services that may be needed.

Staff support children to take part in a range of activities. One child expressed an interest in learning to play the piano. Staff have provided them with a keyboard and are encouraging their interest.

Children benefit from living in a very well furnished and comfortable home. The homely feel is enhanced by not having a staff office.

Feedback from social workers and other professionals is positive. They praised the staff for the quality of care they provide, their communication skills and their safeguarding practices.

The safety of children

Between May and mid-August 2020, several challenging incidents occurred which resulted in children being at risk of harm, staff being injured and the police being called. Reflecting on this difficult period, managers have identified learning and have been developing and improving practice in the home. The admission process has been reviewed, incidents are carefully evaluated and behaviour support plans are

updated to provide guidance for staff about how to help children. However, matching children successfully to the home requires further work. Currently, matching assessments are not completed when only one child lives here. When they are completed, they do not include an assessment of the prospective child's identified needs, whether staff have the ability to meet these needs or the impact of known risks in the local community. In addition, the locality assessment requires review to include lessons learned about increased risks in the area.

Staff spoken to demonstrate a good understanding of their safeguarding role. For example, staff respond appropriately when children go missing and children's individual risk assessments are of a good quality and provide staff with clear guidance about how to manage and mitigate risk. Incidents of children going missing from the home rose between May and mid-August 2020 when the home was a crisis provision. These children have now left the home.

Restraint is only used when required and the views of children and staff about what happened and why are always sought. However, restraint records require improvement as they do not always include information about the duration of each individual hold as required. This does not aid the manager's monitoring of these records.

Leaders and managers

The home is managed by an experienced registered manager who has a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. The manager regularly monitors and reviews work undertaken at the home and uses information from this to improve practices.

Appropriate staffing levels are provided. This is a relatively new team which includes some staff with limited experience. However, induction, training, working alongside experienced staff and regular, good-quality supervision help new staff to develop their skills.

Staff feel that they are well supported by the manager and the deputy. During the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders and managers have been creative in continuing to provide training for staff. Online training has supplemented face-to-face training in the garden to adhere to social distancing rules and to keep everyone safe.

Following a review by the registered persons, a new independent visitor has been recruited as it was felt that previous reports did not aid the development of the home.

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
6: The quality and purpose of care standard (1) The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— (a) understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; (b) use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— (b) ensure that staff— (iv) provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6(1)(a)(b)(2)(b)(iv)) In particular, ensure that placement plans provide staff with clear guidance about how they will meet the child's identified needs.	07/11/2020

Recommendations

- Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

In particular, record the duration of each individual restraint hold.

- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. The Statement of Purpose is an important document in the process of care planning as it sets out the needs of children the home is set up and equipped to care for. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)

In particular, complete impact risk assessments for all children and take into account the staff's skills to meet the child's identified needs and identified risk in the local area.

- When establishing the home, the registered person must ensure that it is suitably located so that children are safeguarded effectively and can access services to meet needs identified in their relevant plans (see regulations 12(2)(c)). Under regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

In particular, ensure that leaders and managers review this document to identify any additional or increased risks.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2588486

Registered provider: Beaufort Care Group

Registered provider address: Unit 2, Hollygrove Business Park, Verwood Road, Ashley, Dorset BH24 2DB

Responsible individual: Neil Foster

Registered manager: Sally Bailey

Inspector

Wendy Anderson, Social Care Inspector

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