

2673201

Registered provider: Dorset Council-Social Care, Children's Homes

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care for one child. The home is run by the local authority.

The manager has been registered since 17 March 2022. This is when the home opened.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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Not previously inspected		
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Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The child's experiences and progress are mixed due to the weaknesses identified in help and protection.

The child enjoys living in the home and feels staff are supportive. Staff show genuine affection for the child. Pictures of the child are on display around the home, and the child has chosen how to decorate their room. The child's memory book from a previous home is on display and the child enjoys sharing these memories with trusted adults. The child is closely supported in their daily life, and staff ensure that they are active outside of the home. Staff always ensure that the child has the right footwear to play football, which the child particularly enjoys. Leaders and managers planned the child's transition to the home, with the child getting to know staff in advance of moving in.

The child is now re-engaged with an education provider. This is in the early stages; however, it gives the child an opportunity to spend time with people outside of the home. Staff support the child to engage with a range of other professionals, working as a team to deliver the support needed. Staff recognise that the child's world is small, despite significant professional involvement. The child has started to spend time with other children in the local area and staff are exploring groups linked to the child's interests. The manager works closely with the social worker to explore how to support the child to spend positive time with family.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The child says they feel safe in the home, and could identify staff they would speak to if they had any worries. Staff identified support needed by the child to help with their emotional and mental health. Through working with health services, the child now has new medication that they feel is helpful to them in their day-to-day life.

Staff report that as a result, the child is more able to engage in reflective conversations, and participate in the restorative model of the home. However, this remains to be embedded. Staff remain vigilant to the risk of the child going missing. Staff took prompt action on the one occasion the child went missing. Staff support the child to safely access the community and internet through application of the inherent jurisdiction order.

A number of serious incidents have occurred in the home. Several incidents have been reported to the police by staff and managers. Leaders and managers work closely with multi-agency partners and have reached a shared agreement around reporting to the police incidents of damage made to the home. However, as a result

of this reporting, the child is criminalised for actions in their home. The impact of this on the child is not yet understood.

Management oversight following incidents identifies clear actions to take to keep the child and others safe. However, it lacks sufficient reflection or learning. As such, it is not clear that there is consideration of alternative strategies to use in the home instead of reporting to the police. Additionally, the manager does not always comment on concerns about self-harm raised during incidents. These concerns are not tracked and so understanding of risk remains under-developed. However, when the child made a statement of intent to harm, a clear plan to support was put in place with input from mental health professionals.

The behaviour support plan does not provide staff with clear guidance about the actions they should take to support the child. As such, the document does not guide staff in how to manage situations safely. The quality of information in the risk assessment is inconsistent. Some sections clearly outline the risks and indicators. However, in other parts, the language is unclear. The risk assessment does not make it clear why the child is subject to an inherent jurisdiction order to deprive them of their liberty. As such, staff cannot assess or understand how to safely manage that risk and explore the reduction of restrictions.

Leaders and managers do not complete suitability checks in line with regulatory requirements in respect of agency workers employed to work in the home. As such, they cannot be satisfied that agency workers are safe to work with the child. Use of agency staff has been minimal and they always work with a permanent member of staff, mitigating the potential impact on the child.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home is run by a qualified and suitably experienced manager. The manager plays a vital role in the professional network, sharing information and working collaboratively towards improving outcomes for the child. The manager attends regular stability meetings that helps the professional network to understand the home environment for the child and staff. Feedback from professionals is positive. They value the good working relationships and the collaborative working to develop and progress plans.

Although the staff have experience of working with children, they have minimal experience of working in a children's home. Staff report that the high level of support required for the child is at times challenging and exhausting. This has resulted in some staff moving on from the home within a short space of time. Staff report feeling well supported by leaders and managers. Leaders and managers are aware of staff morale and are working alongside staff to role model and build confidence. As a consequence of this, the time leaders and managers have for monitoring and oversight is compromised.

Staff receive regular supervision, and have the opportunity to share concerns about the home and to reflect on the support provided to the child. Staff have opportunities for group and clinical supervision. Staff receive essential training. However, some staff have not received training in de-escalation and understanding self-harm. This training is booked in over the coming weeks. The manager considers outstanding training when deciding on shift partners. This ensures that someone with the necessary training is working with the child.

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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— an understanding about acceptable behaviour. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11 (1)(b) (2)(a)(i)(ix)(xi)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that the behaviour support plan clearly identifies how staff should support the child. The registered person should also ensure that a clear understanding of the impact of trauma on decision-making is reflected within the ways staff help the child to develop positive relationships. In addition, the registered person should give due consideration to local and national protocols regarding the criminalisation of children in care to provide an environment in which positive relationships can be built.	17 June 2022
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—	17 June 2022

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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that the risk assessment contains a clear outline of the risks posed, using clear language. The registered person should also ensure that the risk assessment references the specific risks which have led to the deprivation of liberty through the making of an order under inherent jurisdiction of the court.	
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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that systems are in place to ensure monitoring and reviews are undertaken of incidents, to inform the care provided in the home. The registered person should also ensure that staff have the necessary skills needed to support the child.	24 June 2022
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety.	10 June 2022

The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children’s home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that they satisfy themselves that the required checks have been completed for agency members of staff and record this.	
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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: 2673201

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Dorset Council-Social Care, Children's Homes

Registered provider address: Dorset Council, County Hall, Colliton Park,
Dorchester DT1 1XJ

Responsible individual: Paula Bates

Registered manager: Victoria Marner

Inspector

Clare Nixon, Social Care Inspector

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