

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	16 March 2016
Unique reference number	SC011972
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Hillcrest Childrens Services Limited 04409479
Registered person address	Langstone Gate, Solent Road, Havant, Hampshire PO9 1TR

Responsible individual	William Crosby
Registered manager	Rachel Burgess
Inspector	Keith Riley

Inspection date	16 March 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC011972

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Children are making good progress. They are growing in self-esteem and social confidence. They are able to manage their behaviour much better.
- Children make the long journey to school every day. Their attendance is excellent. They make good progress in their academic studies.
- Children are in good health. They get the specialist help they need. They make healthy eating choices.
- Children engage in a range of stimulating and meaningful activities within the home and the community.
- Staff manage the group dynamics well. They deal with bullying incidents swiftly and prevent situations escalating.
- The registered manager knows the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She has a comprehensive development plan in place which includes good consideration of the wishes of children.
- The registered manager reviews incidents. She identifies any practice concerns and addresses them through the formal supervision process.
- Children do not engage in risk-taking behaviour. Staff keep them safe.

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person is required to ensure that staff: (v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered	30 June 2016

person. (Regulation 12 (2)(a)(v))	
Notify each relevant person without delay if there is any other incident which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	30 June 2016
In order to meet the engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met standard, the registered person is required to: (d) seek to develop effective professional relationships with such persons as the registered person considers appropriate, especially local authority safeguarding professionals for advice. (Regulation 5 (d))	30 June 2016
In order to meet the positive relationships standard the registered person is required to ensure that staff: (iii) encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, especially that sanctions are applied consistently. (Regulation 11 (2)(a)(iii))	30 June 2016

Full report

Information about this children's home

A private organisation owns and manages this home. The home is registered to accommodate up to six children, irrespective of gender. It specialises in providing care for children who have experienced trauma in their lives and display a variety of behavioural problems. Currently the home offers accommodation for boys only.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12 August 2015	CH – Interim	Improved effectiveness
16 February 2015	CH – Full	Good
23 October 2014	CH – Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14 January 2014	CH – Interim	Good progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Children make good progress. They grow in self-esteem and develop their social skills. They feel confident in approaching local charity shops for voluntary work, from a starting position of social withdrawal. A placing social worker said, 'He is doing very, very well and developing his social skills.' A child said, 'The staff have helped me gain confidence and shown me my true potential.' Children, who have been anxious at bedtime, now sleep well in the secure knowledge that staff are available. Children are able to develop their self-management competencies. Their behaviour improves significantly. Some children, who have experienced multiple foster care breakdowns due to their violence, progress to an extent where a return to foster care is planned. Children who attend the organisation's own school face a long journey every day. A comprehensive risk assessment guides staff who use distraction strategies to keep children occupied. They deal effectively with any issues as they arise. Staff have worked well with education professionals to develop a positive reward system for behaviour to and from the school. Education and care staff work well together to promote good behaviour on the journey. There is good progress. Children's attendance is excellent and they are making good academic progress. An example is a child who no longer needs one-to-one support for a particular subject. The organisation has clear plans to source education nearer to the home. Children are in good health. They make healthy eating choices, and enjoy a range of nutritious food. Staff ensure that they attend routine appointments and are up to date with vaccinations. Children with specialist lifelong health needs get the support they need. Staff treat children with sensitive medical issues with dignity and respect. They ensure that children receive the necessary help discreetly. Staff follow the robust medication procedure to ensure that children receive their prescribed medication. A placing social worker said, 'Staff manage his health well, things have got much better.' Children enjoy a range of meaningful and stimulating activities, such as ice-skating, football and swimming. They are able to form good relationships with staff who share an interest in the particular sport they like to pursue, such as basketball. They engage with the wider community, such as helping out on a local farm. Children enjoy their home environment through riding their scooter or bicycle, as well as group activities such as board games. They personalise their rooms, giving them a sense of identity and belonging.	

Staff fully support family contact. They support children who find this difficult. They supervise when necessary. A placing social worker said, 'There is excellent progress with contact, things are stable.'

Staff support children to be as independent as possible in accordance with their ages. Children do their allocated chores enthusiastically, such as clearing the table or taking their washing to the laundry, and earn reward points.

Children have a voice. As well as day-to-day dialogue, they have meaningful discussions with their key member of staff. Key workers use tools to identify a child's best communication style and method of learning so that sessions are meaningful. Children also complete questionnaires about how they feel living in the home. They contribute to their statutory reviews and the home's development plan. They use the formal complaints procedure if necessary, confident that there will be a thorough investigation and response.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
Children are safe and say they feel safe. A child stated, 'The home is good because I am kept safe and there are adults to help me with my problems.' Children do not engage in risk-taking behaviour, such as running away from care. They say they have adults they can talk to about anything that worries them. Children feel secure and confident that the staff will take care of them. A child said, 'This place is the only home that actually feels like home.' Staff use children's risk assessments and behaviour support plans to guide them in their day-to-day care. In the main, they follow these diligently. In some cases, staff have not adhered to the guidance. They have made poor decisions that had the potential to put children at risk. The registered manager took corrective action but did not involve other professionals. She did notify all placing authorities during the inspection and there is no current risk to children. Staff are acutely aware of the group's dynamics, especially between older and younger children. They are on hand to defuse situations and prevent them escalating. They deal with bullying on several fronts, such as working with the child in key work sessions and using positive rewards for good behaviour. Staff apply consequences that are proportionate and appropriate. They have not always applied these consistently. Staff do not use physical intervention as a matter of routine. They carefully document such incidents. They use a 'lifespace interview' to debrief the child. The	

registered manager provides robust oversight. She quickly notices any practice issues and addresses them through the formal supervision process. She provides further training and guidance, if necessary, to nurture the children-staff relationships.

Staff do safer internet work with children. They teach children how to keep themselves safe online. They ensure that other safety measures are in place, such as software filters. They are aware of the risks and alert to any child trying to gain unauthorised access to the internet, such as using a tablet in a local shop.

Children live in a safe environment. The registered manager ensures that all necessary health and safety certification is in place and there are regular fire drills.

The registered manager adopts safer recruitment practice. She employs staff who are suitable to work with vulnerable children.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
An effective and competent manager is leading the home. She deploys staff effectively to meet the needs of the children. She has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She has good monitoring systems in place. She has identified her own personal development needs with a clear timescale for training. She has consulted with children, staff and senior management to produce a comprehensive development plan for the next 12 months. The registered manager has good vision for the service. She has recently updated the statement of purpose. The registered manager is having success in building a staff team. Staff work well together to provide the best possible care. They speak positively of their induction, training and peer support. A member of staff said, 'I feel like I am well supported.' The registered manager manages training particularly well. She ensures that all core training is completed and bespoke training needs are identified. She has ensured that staff are up to date with current issues, such as the risk of radicalisation. Care planning and placement planning is of an excellent standard. The registered manager ensures that all looked after child paperwork is in place. She translates this into succinct placement plans. Central to practice are the children's views. Children have access to an advocacy service. The registered manager engages well with other professionals, such as placing	

social workers. They report that communication is good. She works well with education professionals, such as agreeing strategies for rewards and consequences for behaviour on the journey to and from school. The manager ensures that key staff provide comprehensive reports to statutory reviews. She encourages children to attend in person and encourages staff to represent their views if necessary. Staff record outcomes so that the team can implement any agreed actions immediately, pending receipt of the formal minutes.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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