

SC029950

Registered provider: Somerset County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered as a children's home that provides short breaks for young people who have physical and learning difficulties.

The home is owned and managed by a local authority.

The registered manager has been registered with Ofsted since 2013.

Inspection dates: 2 to 3 May 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 22 August 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/08/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28/09/2016	Full	Good
03/03/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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
7: The children's views, wishes and feelings standard The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care. (Regulation 7 (1)(c)(2)(a)(iv))	28/06/2019
33: Employment of staff The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. 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 has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; and	28/06/2019

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)(d))	
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Recommendations

- Each child's talents and interests should be understood and nurtured, with selecting activities based on their personal preferences and abilities, so far as is reasonable. Staff should also support children to try activities that are 'new' for them, where appropriate. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.4)
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5) In particular, ensure that behavioural risks are assessed and staff are provided with guidance on how to mitigate and manage the risk.
- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair, and that the principles set out in 9.35 are respected. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)
- The registered person should ensure that external agency staff meet the requirements in regulation 32(4) regarding mandatory qualifications. The registered person should consider their skills, qualifications and any induction necessary before they commence work in the home. The use of agency staff should be carefully monitored and reviewed to ensure that children receive continuity of care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.16)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people who stay at this home for a short break receive good-quality, sensitive and highly personalised care. Staff plan well for young people's stays. Prior to their arrival, the staff prepare the young people's rooms by displaying their favourite personal items. Staff know and understand the young people's diverse needs very well and relationships are good.

Overall, young people enjoy their short-break visits. They have opportunities to mix with other young people and to join in with activities. Good use is made of the home's large outdoor play areas, art room and sensory room. Day trips out to places of interest do

take place, however opportunities for the young people to experience new activities are limited.

Young people learn to be more independent and are encouraged to take part in a range of household activities and chores. These include vacuuming, making their bed and clearing the table after mealtimes. Families recognise the progress that young people are making. A parent said, 'My son's independence and social skills have improved so much. The facilities within the home are excellent, the grounds lend themselves to his outdoors nature and the staff are always happy to play endless football with him.'

Staff encourage young people who have communication needs to express themselves, and to make choices. Young people are helped to make decisions about their stay and staff support them to use symbols when needed. The manager and team have recognised that the current formal consultation system is not effective. Plans are in place to develop this further.

Parents are very pleased with the care and support that is provided. They spoke highly of the manager and staff team and said that there is good communication between them and the staff. One parent said, 'I am very happy with the service and activities they provide. Communication with me is good, all questions are answered promptly and efficiently, and they always go above and beyond to support requests we make.'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

The arrangements to safeguard young people are good. All staff receive safeguarding training, and safeguarding is an agenda item at all team meetings. Staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and know what to do if they have safeguarding concerns. The manager has not made any referrals to the designated officer to the multi-agency safeguarding hub, although she knows how to do this should it be necessary.

The attention given to helping the young people to feel safe, and young people being kept safe, is very good. Two parents and a social worker who contributed to this inspection said that they also feel that young people are safe. There are currently no concerns in relation to young people going missing from the home. Restraint is not used, nor sanctions imposed. Staff effectively follow behaviour support plans which guide them well about how to support young people to manage their anxieties and frustrations.

Overall, continuity of care is good. However, in recent months there have been gaps in the staffing rota. As a result, the manager has commissioned temporary staff to work in the home to ensure that appropriate staffing levels are in place. The manager is actively recruiting new staff, as she is aware that the use of temporary staff reduces continuity for young people. No new permanent staff have been appointed since the last inspection. As a result, safer recruitment checks could not be verified at this inspection so the previous requirement will remain.

One of the manager's strengths is her careful consideration and good planning for young

people being introduced to the home for short breaks and for young people who are due to leave. The manager prioritises the individual needs of young people to ensure that when they visit, they stay alongside other young people who have similar needs and with whom they get along well.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager leads by example, and her dedication towards wanting the best for all the young people who stay for a short break is evident. The staff team members are competent and calm and know the young people and their needs well. Staff are competently supervised and attend regular team meetings. They share practice issues, reflect on their own performance and review young people's aims and progress.

The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the service. Quality assurance processes have improved and are, in the main, effective. However, the monitoring of two significant incident reports had not been reviewed swiftly.

Care plans and generic risk assessments are detailed and guide staff well about how to meet young people's needs. These plans are regularly reviewed and updated. However, behaviour support plans do not always include information about how staff are to manage all behavioural risks.

The home's environment is continually improving, with good emphasis on making the home feel child friendly, comfortable and welcoming. The young people's bedrooms have been tastefully redecorated, and they are warm and inviting.

A social worker spoke well of the manager and staff team and the communication between them. The social worker said, 'All of my experience with the home is positive. They are accommodating, provide therapeutic care and support. I cannot think of anything they need to improve upon.'

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC029950

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: County Hall, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4DY

Responsible individual: Robert Eveleigh

Registered manager: Tammie Rose

Inspector:

Sharron Escott, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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