

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: 22 to 23 August 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
---	--

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

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

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: 21 August 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/08/2017	Full	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
16: Statement of purpose The registered person must– notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(3)(b))	01/10/2018
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person should ensure that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to: 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, ensure that risk assessments, care plans and behaviour management plans provide staff with up-to-date and clear instructions about how to meet and respond to the young people's daily needs. In addition, ensure that a suitable system is in place to enable staff to respond consistently to unknown marks on children.	01/10/2018
32: Fitness of workers 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	01/10/2018

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 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))	
36: Children’s case records The registered person must maintain records (‘case records’) for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child. The registered person must ensure that all case records are kept up to date. In addition, the registered person must ensure that all records identify the author of reports and are dated. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b))	01/10/2018

Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home’s policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Inspection judgements

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

This short-break service requires improvement, because the records do not confirm the actions that staff say that they have taken when they identify bruises and abrasions on children. The registered manager confirmed that information about all unexplained injuries is shared with social workers and parents, yet accepts that this information is not always recorded. These recording omissions are a result of staff not being provided with clear and concise instructions about who is responsible for reporting identified injuries, where to record them and the actions taken in response.

Children's dining experiences are varied, and require improvement. During the inspection, the evening mealtime was not planned well. Children were not provided with the appropriate equipment to assist them in eating and drinking, as detailed in their individual support plans, neither were they supported to wash their hands.

Children have access to a wide range of play equipment and materials. Good use is made of the art and sensory room. The outside space has been creatively designed to provide the children with opportunities to enjoy sensory play safely. In addition, children benefit from a variety of activities in the wider community. These opportunities include visits to local parks and activity venues, such as swimming and leisure facilities.

An external professional said that one of the manager's strengths is how well she supports families and children to take up the short-break services. The professional said, 'The registered manager goes above and beyond'. This excellent practice was seen during the inspection. The registered manager ensures that children's needs are given the highest of priority, and introductions are exceptionally well planned. Outreach services have been provided to a family to support it, as well as the child. An external professional spoke positively about this specific support, confirming that the provision had 'exceeded the family's expectations and requirements'.

Children enjoy their short-break stays. Their views about their experiences are sought regularly. Parents and social workers spoken to were unanimously complimentary about the quality of care and services provided by the registered manager and staff team. Parents and social workers value this service and are confident that children are kept safe from harm.

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

Children who stay for short breaks are, in the main, helped and protected effectively. Weaknesses identified at this inspection relate to the manager's oversight and monitoring of body maps. The records do not consistently detail what actions the staff have taken when bruises and abrasions are identified on children.

Children are looked after by staff who are safely recruited. In recent months, agency

staff have worked in the home to cover staff shortages. The registered manager has verified the agency's staff recruitment checks to ensure that the agency staff are safe to work with children. However, she has not requested additional information from the agency to enable her to further assess the agency workers' suitability. For example, the manager has not fully assessed the agency workers' skills, experience and training to ensure that they can meet the diverse and complex needs of the children.

Support plans require improvement. The registered manager has introduced new care and behaviour management plans. While these documents provide staff with information about how to care for children, the detail within these documents varies. As a result, not all of these documents provide staff with clear and concise information about how to manage children's needs.

Children's behaviour is managed well, and restraints are rare. Those used have been used only to guide and redirect children from harm. There have not been any safeguarding referrals, missing from home incidents or complaints.

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

Monitoring by the registered manager and the independent visitor requires improvement to be good. They have not identified omissions in the records completed by staff. There is insufficient evidence that the registered manager has monitored children's daily records, one-to-one meetings and the staff handover journal effectively.

The quality of records maintained by the staff team requires improvement. Records relating to accidents and injuries do not consistently detail the actions taken by staff in response. Staff do not always record consistently if parents and/or social workers have been informed.

Staff are provided with regular supervisions, and team meetings are well attended. Despite this, the minutes of these formal meetings do not show that staff reflect on their practice or if the team members share examples of good practice between themselves.

The home is meeting its aims and objectives as set out in the statement of purpose. The registered manager has recently updated this document, yet has not forwarded a copy to Ofsted as required.

The registered manager understands most, but not all, of the strengths and weaknesses of the home, and has a development plan in place. She acknowledges that the weaknesses identified at this inspection are a result of ineffective management monitoring, and plans to improve this.

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 difference 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

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2018