

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	01/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC030367
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school
Registered provider	Cotswold Chine School
Responsible individual	Jason Lukas
Registered manager	Kelly Lawson
Inspector	Nicola Lownds

Inspection date	01/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged requires improvement at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness. Leaders and managers have taken a robust approach to meet the requirements set following the last inspection. These have created positive outcomes for children and young people. The development plan evidences that leaders and managers have a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas for improvement. The child protection policy effectively safeguards children and young people. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children and young people from harm. The registered manager works collaboratively with designated professionals when any safeguarding concerns arise. Leaders and managers have revised the training programme to include some more in-depth safeguarding training. Allegations about staff are reducing over time. Leaders and managers believe that this is because 'staff are better trained': 'We have done a lot of work about positive attachments and better de-escalation.' Young people say that they feel safe living here. Leaders and managers have improved the risk assessment process that they instigate following an allegation about a member of staff. There are now clear records maintained around expectations placed on staff during the allegations management process. This includes systems to provide support to staff. Leaders and managers identify patterns and trends when children and young people go missing. Missing-from-home protocols are comprehensive and individual to each child. They provide extensive information about the child's needs, risks and strategies to initiate if they do go missing. The missing-from-home protocols are effective, and staff actively search for children and young people if they go missing from home. When children and young people return home, staff are attentive to their needs, welcome them home and ensure that they are safe and well. The registered manager ensures that children and young people receive an independent return home interview and will challenge placing authorities appropriately if they do not achieve this within 72 hours. When leaders and managers identify a concern that a child or young person may be at risk of abuse and exploitation while missing, they act swiftly to report these concerns to families and professionals, including the local police force. Leaders and managers have an effective monitoring system in place to enable them to analyse young people's behaviour. As a result, there is good insight into	

behaviour incidents, restraint and consequences. This informs the review of placement plans, risk assessments and behaviour support plans. There is a continued reduction in the use of physical restraints. Positively, leaders and managers aspire to eradicate the use of these as a means of managing behaviour.

Staff support children and young people to reflect on incidents. They consult young people about the strategies that they want staff to use when they need support to manage their own behaviour. Debriefs following restraint for children and young people and staff are supportive, informative and reflective. Placement plans incorporate behaviour support plans and risk assessments. These detail risks, triggers and de-escalation techniques individual to each young person. Leaders and managers have improved the system for recording and monitoring the effectiveness of any consequence imposed on children and young people.

Placement plans are live documents that are updated as children and young people progress. Staff review these regularly, and they demonstrate good knowledge of the needs of children and young people. When a decision is made for a young person to move to a different house, risk assessments detail the impact on all the young people it affects. On one occasion, the risk assessment did not include all the information that leaders and managers used to inform the move from one home to another, which is a recommendation from this inspection.

Comments from children and young people about their care are positive. These include statements such as 'I am doing really well,' 'I've started the youth club,' 'I like living here,' 'My bedroom has loads of Lego in it,' 'I'm not going to go missing anymore,' 'I feel safe' and 'We get to go horse riding.' The houses provide good quality accommodation. Leaders and managers have a continuous refurbishment plan. Some of the homes require further attention to make living areas more homely.

Leaders and managers have developed a plan to ensure that all staff have their performance appraised at least annually. This was a requirement at the previous inspection that has been met.

Information about this children's home

This independent school is also registered as a children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for a maximum of 42 children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties or complex needs. The accommodation for children and young people is provided across seven houses located on or near to the main school site.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/10/2016	Full	Requires improvement
19/01/2016	Full	Requires improvement
14/07/2015	Full	Inadequate
21/07/2015	Full	Inadequate
30/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/12/2014	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Continue to improve the homes so that they are nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of children. Homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Ensure the quality of records maintained about children and young people. Particularly, risk assessments about moving houses are helpful to the child and consistent with the standard set across the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors 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 that 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 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.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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