

Children's home inspection – Full

Inspection date	18/10/2016
Unique reference number	SC030367
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Residential special school
Registered provider	Cotswold Chine School
Responsible individual	Jason Lukas
Registered manager	Kelly Lawson
Inspector	Nicola Lownds Lucy Martin David Kidner

Inspection date	18/10/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
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.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC030367

Summary of findings

The children's home provision requires improvement because:

- Staff did not have sufficient information about a young person's needs for them to make an informed decision to manage risks. Leaders and managers took effective action to rectify this weakness during the inspection.
- Leaders and managers fail to keep records that detail discussions they have with staff following allegations. It is not clear whether staff understand the risk assessment and expectations that they need to adhere to while they continue to work with children and young people.
- Leaders and managers do not keep comprehensive records about the use of sanctions. The analysis of the effectiveness of the measures used requires improvement.
- Staff do not have their performance and fitness to perform their role, appraised annually.

The children's home strengths

- Children and young people feel safe. They say they are happy with their care and experiences in the home. They feel that they have a good range of activities available both in and out of the home.
- Staff develop warm and nurturing relationships with children and young people. Children and young people say that they are listened to. There are some good examples of children making choices.
- The health needs of children and young people are met well. Children and young people benefit from accessing the home's therapy services. This support service gives children and young people access to specialist therapy services when they need it most.
- Leaders and managers take the required action when managing child protection concerns. There are good links with external professionals and these links contribute to children and young people being safe.
- Staff provide children and young people with a good-quality debriefing following incidents such as going missing from care and physical intervention. Children and young people engage in this process well, and staff help them to understand risk.

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
12 The Protection of Children Standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person is to ensure that staff: 2(a)(iii) have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff have good knowledge about children and young people prior to them receiving care, including the safe use of electronic devices. The registered person must also ensure that staff have the skills and take action when they see a situation that may pose a risk to children and young people.	01/12/2016
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that- 1(b) promotes the welfare of children and young people. In particular, this standard requires that there is evidence that staff understand risk assessments and expectations they are working within when an allegation has been made about them. Additionally, to meet this standard, staff need to receive support in relation to allegations and records must evidence this.	01/12/2016
33: Employment of staff The registered person must ensure that all employees have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33(4)(c))	01/12/2016
35: Behaviour management policies and records The registered person must ensure that: within 24 hours of the	01/12/2016

use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes a description of the measure and its duration; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(iv)(vii)) This specifically relates to the recording of sanctions and consequences.	
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Full report

Information about this children's home

This independent school is also registered as a children's home. The school follows the principles of care and education developed by Rudolf Steiner. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for a maximum of 42 children and young people with 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
19/01/2016	Full	Requires improvement
14/07/2015	Full	Inadequate
21/07/2015	Full	Inadequate
30/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home	Requires improvement
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are positive. However, this judgement is impacted upon by the weaknesses in how well children and young people are helped and protected and the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers work. Children and young people like living in the home. They give positive feedback about the care that staff provide and the opportunities they have. Some identify that they have made progress relating to improved behaviour, attending school, and building and maintaining relationships. One young person said, 'It's like a family here.' There are a wide range of activities on offer for children and young people, both in and out of the home. Some decide to access clubs in the community, while others enjoy exploring their interests, such as sport, shopping, trains and computing. There are positive relationships between children and young people and staff. Many children and young people identify well with key individual members of staff who they can turn to and seek out when they need emotional support. Children and young people feel comfortable to make choices in the home on a day-to-day basis. There are also more formal routes to do this, through house meetings, accessing advocates and the school council. Children and young people know how to complain, and some do use the formal complaints process to raise an issue when they are unhappy. Bedrooms are individually personalised to each child's taste. They are homely, and you get a sense of the children's personality in their homes. Leaders and managers continue to improve the decor, making the houses feel more homely. Bars, which had been fitted to some windows as a safety measure, have been replaced with less obvious restrictors, improving the appearance of the windows. This is an ongoing project. In certain areas of the houses there are signs and other items, such as soap dispensers, that could be reviewed to ascertain if they are still necessary Children and young people have access to appropriate healthcare services, such as general practitioners, dentists and opticians. When a more complex health need is present, the staff work collaboratively with young people, their families and health professionals to meet the specific need. The arrangements for storing and administering medication are safe.	

Access to therapy services is good as there is a large team available to offer support to children and young people. This service promotes their welfare and improves their emotional well-being. The therapy team integrates well with the staff providing care. There are extensive plans about the therapeutic input children and young people require.

Leaders and managers implement comprehensive placement plans that detail the individual needs of children and young people. This includes information about their past experiences, the purpose for the placement, and specific targets and goals they are aiming to achieve. Records are personalised, and children and young people's identity, likes and dislikes, and how they wish to be cared for come across strongly.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
During the inspection, staff did not take control of a situation that could have potentially put a number of children and young people at risk. Staff did not show a good understanding of potential risks or take immediate action to minimise them. This relates to the safe use of electronic devices and staff knowledge about safe contacts for children and young people. Records do not provide enough detail of sanctions imposed by staff on children and young people. The records are not sufficiently specific and fail to include the exact task asked of children and young people, or the amount of money deducted when a financial reparation is imposed. Leaders' and managers' monitoring of the effectiveness of sanctions is weak. Children and young people talk positively about their care. They say that they 'feel safe'. All children and young people have a personalised safety plan that they agree to share with each other. These plans detail personal strategies, such as going for a walk or making a cup of tea, which may help them when they feel anxious. Placements plans include information about behaviour support strategies and the risks posed to children and young people that they need support with. These plans are personal documents that clearly describe the individual young person well. Staff receive appropriate training in behaviour management and de-escalating incidents. Leaders and managers continue to place emphasis on the restraint reduction programme. The number of restraints continues to decrease significantly. It is clear that leaders and managers have prioritised this area of improvement within their development plan. When a restraint has occurred, children and young people get	

the opportunity to talk about it with staff and raise any concerns they may have.

Staff act swiftly when children and young people go missing from the home. Immediate searches take place in the local area, and staff follow missing protocols well. Children and young people have a clear missing profile which staff share with external agencies. A social worker said, 'The home's response to missing [children or young people] is good.' Leaders and managers have established good relationships with the local police force and work collaboratively with it to find children and young people. Staff have a good understanding of child sexual exploitation and the signs to look out for. Debriefing discussions about incidents of going missing routinely explore relationships with others, areas where they may have been and any possible risk of exploitation. Independent return home interviews do not always take place despite the registered manager requesting them from the relevant agencies. The registered manager could escalate this with more tenacity.

There is good support for children and young people who put themselves at risk through self-harm, substance misuse or going missing. Leaders and managers have established positive relationships with external agencies in the community, and they offer support in these areas. In addition, staff provide children and young people with good-quality debriefing discussions to explore their feelings, emotions and identify any further areas of support they require. The therapy team links in well with care staff to deliver this support and reflection.

Leaders and managers deal effectively with safeguarding concerns in ways that best way that protects children and young people. The registered manager has a good understanding of Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) policies and procedures for protecting children and young people. Leaders and managers have made appropriate referrals to the LSCB, including when there has been an allegation about a member of staff. Records are well maintained, and include the outcomes of safeguarding concerns, with details of any actions taken to prevent further risk.

The training programme for staff includes child protection training. Recently, staff completed 'Prevent' training to increase their awareness of radicalisation. Leaders and managers have implemented a 'Prevent' risk assessment.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
Leaders and managers have made significant improvements since the last	

inspection to address the shortfalls identified. The previous requirements are met.

Not all recording systems show good evidence of how monitoring by leaders and managers impacts positively on the quality of care that children and young people receive. For example, the monitoring and analysis of sanctions and consequences and their impact on children and young people requires improvement.

Leaders and managers fail to keep a record of discussions held with staff members when an allegation has been made against them. There is no evidence to confirm that staff understand that there is a risk assessment with strategies that they must adhere to while the allegation is investigated. Supervision records do not show how leaders and managers support staff during an allegation. Neither is there any follow-up with the member of staff once leaders and managers establish an outcome from the designated officer.

Staff receive supervision regularly and say that they feel supported by leaders and managers. This level of rigour and support is not as robust in the appraisals of staff performance that are required to take place annually. There are significant gaps in the appraisals of staff. Some staff groups have had a group appraisal but this is not specific to their own performance and development.

The workforce plan is a comprehensive document that details the ethos of the home and lists the training provided to staff, from their induction to ongoing development. There is an extensive training programme available to staff which includes topic areas such as self-harm, attachment, drug misuse and trauma.

Staffing provides young people with stable relationships. There are a small number of vacancies which does not impact on the quality or consistency of care that children and young people receive. Leaders and managers have a robust recruitment process that follows 'safer recruitment' guidelines.

Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have implemented a new staffing structure. This increases the number of senior staff on duty in the home. The structure is clear and the staff in these roles have a good understanding about their roles and responsibilities.

Leaders and managers have made improvements to the monitoring systems. The registered manager identifies some strengths and weaknesses in the report she completes about the quality of care. A new independent visitor has been appointed who focuses a large proportion of their time in the houses with children and young people. Leaders and managers feel that the quality of these reports has improved and provides critique that they can respond to.

Leaders and managers share information with relevant agencies such as social workers, local police and Ofsted. The quality of the notifications of significant events in children and people's lives has improved. The information is clear about the incident and action taken by leaders and managers.

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 '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 children looked after 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 that 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 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 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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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