

SC030439

Registered provider: Somerset County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide a permanent home and short-break care for up to six children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties or learning disabilities.

The home is owned and managed by a local authority.

The registered manager has been registered with Ofsted since July 2007.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 October 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: 26 July 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/07/2018	Full	Inadequate
26/07/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/10/2016	Full	Good

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
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 clear instructions about how to respond to challenging behaviour. Ensure that staff apply strategies consistently.	01/11/2018
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person should enable, inspire and lead a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous	01/11/2018

improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (2)(a)(h)) In particular, ensure that there is close monitoring, scrutiny and evaluation of records relating to body maps, restraint records and behavioural incidents.	
25: Fire precautions If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home— the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (1)(d)(2)(b)) Ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home are aware of the procedure to be followed in the case of a fire.	01/11/2018
35: Behaviour management policies and records The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure Within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ('the authorised person')— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(vii)(b)(i)(ii))	01/11/2018

Recommendations

- Ensure that children's home staff encourage children to take a proactive role in looking after their day to day health and well-being. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.10) In particular, ensure that staff encourage young people to eat healthier foods outside of their restricted diet.
- Ensure that all children in the home have access to a wide range of leisure and social activities in the community. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 6.10)

Inspection judgements

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

The overall experiences and progress of children require improvement. This is because the action taken to address the widespread shortfalls that were identified at the last full inspection and compliance monitoring visit is in its infancy, and not yet embedded into practice.

Since the last inspection, most children's opportunities and experiences have improved. Most children are provided with a varied range of activities in the home and the wider community. This includes sensory play, visits to parks, trips to the coast and dining out in restaurants and cafes. Leaders and managers are currently reviewing the opportunities for one child whose current activity opportunities are limited.

Children enjoy their dining experiences, and mealtimes are a family-type occasion. However, staff have not always offered a child a healthy and wide range of foods as identified in his placement plan.

Children receive care from a staff team which knows them well. Since the last inspection, the continuity and consistency of care have improved. Staff develop warm and nurturing relationships with children. Children look forward to their stay. A parent said, 'My daughter is flourishing in the staff's care and she is excited to stay at the home.'

Staff use alternative methods of communication competently to offer children choices in activities, meals and day-to-day living. A social worker said, 'Staff are very good at understanding his preferred style of communication. They frequently consult with me and school, to ensure that they have a good understanding of his current vocabulary.'

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

Children's behaviour is managed well, and physical interventions are rare. The interventions have been used appropriately to guide and redirect children from harm. However, records do not demonstrate that discussions have taken place with staff

following the use of an intervention. This does not provide staff with the opportunity to reflect and learn from their practice.

Staff complete body maps when they notice unexplained marks and bruises on children. Management oversight and monitoring of these records require improvement. This is because staff do not fully complete these records in detail to demonstrate the actions taken and the outcome. Leaders and managers confirmed that any concerns in relation to marks and bruises are referred to safeguarding agencies.

Leaders and managers ensure that the home's fire protection systems are tested regularly. All children have a personal evacuation escape plan and they are regularly involved in fire evacuation drills. However, not all staff who work in the home take part in regular fire evacuation drills. This includes relief and agency staff. This does not ensure that all staff working in the home are familiar with the action to take in the event of a fire.

Since the last inspection, there have not been any safeguarding referrals, missing from home incidents or complaints. A parent said, 'My child is safe when she stays at the home.'

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

This home was judged inadequate at the last full inspection in July 2018. Following that inspection, a compliance notice was issued in relation to regulation 13: the leadership and management standard. At the subsequent monitoring visit, the inspector identified that insufficient action had been taken to meet the requirements set out in the compliance notices. Ofsted wrote to the local authority about these concerns.

Since the last full inspection, a registered manager from another home within the local authority is managing this home. She has submitted a comprehensive action plan, designed to address the widespread shortfalls. These improvements are in the early stages of implementation and need to embed into practice. In addition, the interim managers' monitoring and oversight of a variety of records require improvement. The inspectors identified weaknesses in records relating to children's body maps, fire evacuation drills, restraints and behavioural incidents.

The home is divided into two separate living areas. One living area is welcoming and homely. However, the other living area is not as homely. This area lacks soft furnishings, photographs and pictures. The refurbishment and redecoration of a separate flat has yet to be completed and is included as a planned action in the home's maintenance and development plan. The plan includes the removal of some environmental restrictions.

Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have reviewed the format of children's care and support plans and risk assessments. Progress to implement the new plans is slow.

Staff speak highly of the support they have received from the interim manager. They say

that they feel listened to and valued and that their views and opinions are considered. They say that staff morale and communication have improved.

Staff receive regular supervision and team meetings that enable them to reflect on their practice. Since the last inspection, staff have received specialist training that equips them to better meet the current needs of the children.

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: SC030439

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Somerset County Council

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

Responsible individual: Robert Eveleigh

Registered manager: Stephen Mullins

Inspectors

Sharron Escott, social care inspector

David Kidner, social care inspector

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