

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC030439
Inspector	Janice Hawtin
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Somerset County Council
Registered person address	County Hall Taunton Somerset TA1 4DY

Responsible individual	Robert Eveleigh
Registered manager	Stephen John Mullins
Date of last inspection	16/09/2014

Inspection date	05/02/2015
Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged adequate at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **declined in effectiveness**.

The home has declined in effectiveness because leaders and managers have not fully dealt with all the requirements and recommendations made at the previous inspection. In addition, managers and staff have not followed the organisational safeguarding policy which requires them to make referrals to statutory agencies following an allegation made by a young person. The manager has not updated the young person's risk assessment to include the risk of making allegations. As a result, young people are left vulnerable to abuse, and staff who are the subject of allegations are unsupported against unfounded claims.

Refurbishment of the home is now underway; all areas are being painted and decorated to improve the setting for young people. It is not yet clear how the staff will make the home more comfortable and welcoming once the decorating is finished, as such this previous recommendation is repeated until this is achieved.

Managers and leaders have failed to provide all staff with formal monthly supervision; a weakness that was identified at the previous inspection and continues, albeit to a lesser extent. The manager has now received supervision on a regular basis. Additional training has been provided for staff on reflective supervision. The content of supervision sessions has therefore improved to make sessions more meaningful and the staff accountable to their role and responsibilities. Sessions are booked in advance so that staff have opportunities to make the most of this support, and put together additional agenda items. Appraisals have not been completed for staff. As a result, opportunities for their performance to be reviewed, and for leaders and managers to identify and deal with staff's personal development needs are limited.

The records maintained by staff following an incident of restraint or physical intervention require improvement. The Registered Manager is unable to confirm

from the records whether guide techniques and or restraint have been used. Some records are illegible and others contain subjective language to describe antecedents such as 'silly behaviour', or 'attention seeking behaviour'. Staff are skilled in managing the complex needs and unpredictable behaviour of the young people and numbers of physical interventions remain low.

Following the last inspection the Registered Manager returned to fulltime work in the home and is now in day-to-day charge. He has a development plan in place and has recently negotiated a reduction in the numbers of young people the home can accommodate at any one time. Consequently staff will be better placed to carefully consider the young people being accommodated together, and they will be able to continue to manage some very complex behaviour by restricting numbers.

The structure for monitoring by the Registered Manager has improved; it is in a format which promotes change and development to benefit young people.

Young people continue to benefit and progress from the care provided. A professional stakeholder commented 'one of the strengths of this home is the communication between different environments. They share behaviour management success with the school and vice versa. The young person is much calmer and less anxious much of the time'.

Four new senior posts have been created within the care team; three staff have been promoted to these roles. They have taken responsibility for specific areas of development linked to the improvements needed within the home and their own skills. Developing communication with young people and the environment are two of the areas identified.

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home is registered to provide both permanent residence and short-stay breaks for up to eight children and young people who have complex learning disabilities and associated communication and behavioural needs.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/09/2014	Full	adequate
10/03/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
21/11/2013	Full	good
11/02/2013	Interim	good progress

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
30 (2001)	notify without delay the person's listed in column 2 if any events as listed in column 1 of Schedule 5 take place (Regulation 30(1))	27/03/2015
11 (2001)	promote and make proper provision for the welfare of young people accommodated in the home. In particular ensure risk assessment are up to date (Regulation 11(1)(a))	27/03/2015
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose of which shall include detail of the matter listed in(3)(a)-(i) and (4)(a)&(b) of this regulation (Regulation 17B(3)(a)-(i), (4)(a)&(b))	27/03/2015
27	ensure that all persons employed by the registered	27/03/2015

(2001)	person receive appropriate supervision and appraisal. (Regulation 27(4)(a))	
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Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the home provides a comfortable and homely environment. In particular, ensure that the corridors, toilets and bathrooms have a homely look and feel about them (NMS 10.3)
- ensure there is a system in place to monitor the quality and adequacy of record keeping and take action when needed. (NMS 22.1)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.