

SC032439

Registered provider: Wiltshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority short-break children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to eight children and young people who may have learning and/or physical disabilities.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 August 2017

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: 14 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home requires improvement to be good because:

- Senior leaders have failed to ensure that all concerns in relation to safeguarding

and the safety and welfare of young people are referred to relevant safeguarding agencies, including the local authority and Ofsted.

- Leaders and managers do not ensure that the review of the quality of care provided in the home is evaluative, and that it clearly identifies how improvements can be made. Although leaders and managers consult with young people about the quality of care provided, their feedback is not included in this evaluation.
- Leaders and managers have not consulted with all parents and social workers to ensure that any use of a monitoring or surveillance device is based on the young person's assessed need, and risk, and that the practice is regularly reviewed.
- Timescales for the commencement and completion of the planned refurbishment and redecoration of the home are not clear. In addition, not all areas of the home provide a welcoming environment for children.

The children's home's strengths:

- Young people thoroughly enjoy staying for short-breaks. They develop positive relationships with staff and are happy and excited to visit.
- Parents and carers are very positive about the care and support their child receives. They say that there is good communication between them and the staff. Parents say that they feel listened to.
- Young people enjoy a wide range of activities, both within the home and in the wider community.
- Staff seek young people's views about the activities they would like to take part in when they stay at the home, and their views about the care and support they receive.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
05/09/2016	Full	Requires improvement
10/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/06/2015	Full	Requires improvement

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 The protection of children standard is 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 harm to the child. In particular, ensure that issues in relation to safeguarding and the safety and welfare of young people are referred to relevant safeguarding agencies, including the local authority and Ofsted. (Regulation 12(2)(a)(i))	01/09/2017
13: The leadership and management standard The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that 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; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. In particular, ensure that there is a clear action plan for the refurbishment and redecoration of the home, and to ensure that all areas of the home provide a homely environment for young	30/11/2017

people. (Regulation 13(1)(2)(a)(f)(h))	
24: Monitoring and surveillance The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if– the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child’s need for privacy. In particular, continue to consult with parents and social workers to ensure that the use of a monitoring or surveillance device is based on the young person’s assessed need, is risk assessed and the practice is regularly reviewed. (Regulation 24(1)(d))	30/11/2017
45: Review of quality of care The registered person must– supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (4)(a))	30/09/2017

Recommendations

- Ensure that the registered person maintains good employment practice. In particular, review the current application form to ensure that candidates complete a full declaration of their education and attainments, and their full employment history. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 61, paragraph 13.1)

Inspection judgements

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

Staff work positively and proactively with parents to ensure that their child receives continuity of care during their short-break visits. Parents provided positive feedback about the service. One parent said, ‘My daughter loves it and she has settled in really well, there is good communication between us.’ Another parent said, ‘I don’t know what I would have done without them, they have been excellent.’

Young people benefit from positive relationships with staff. They are enthusiastically welcomed by staff when they arrive for their short break. Young people are excited and happy to be at the home, and there are lots of smiles and laughter.

Through regular house meetings, young people’s views and opinions about the home are actively sought. This includes ensuring that young people make choices about the

activities and meals and what they think about these. In addition, discussions take place with young people about how they can keep themselves safe, and how to let staff know if they are worried or upset.

Young people enjoy a wide range of activities, and social and leisure opportunities. These opportunities include visits to local parks, trips to adventure parks and local facilities and yoga. Young people benefit from the plentiful play facilities, both inside and outside of the home. One young person said, 'I like going to the park.' Another young person said, 'I like playing on my iPad and going out.'

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

Senior leaders failed to respond effectively to a child protection concern and did not refer the matter to the designated officer for allegations as required. Senior leaders did instigate an independent investigation and the concern was investigated thoroughly, with a clear audit trail maintained. On this occasion, the failure to report this concern to the designated officer did not have a negative effect on the safety and well-being of young people. Senior leaders have since reflected on their decision, and have learned from this oversight.

Leaders and managers act on and investigate concerns raised relating to care practice issues. Staff maintain body maps in relation to 'bumps and bruises' and these are reviewed by leaders and managers. However, leaders and managers do not always report potential concerns about these injuries to social workers in the first instance.

Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have reviewed the use of restrictions imposed on young people. Key pads have been replaced with push buttons that now allow young people to access all areas of the home, including the rear garden. In addition, the wooden internal gate has been removed from the main kitchen and is now only used for those young people who need this level of support, based on their individual needs, and risks.

At previous inspections, serious concerns were raised in relation to the use of monitoring and surveillance devices, as the use of these practices was intrusive and imposed on young people's privacy. Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have reviewed the use of door alarms, visual monitoring devices and the location of visual monitoring screens. As a result of this review, the use of these devices has reduced. Following the last inspection, leaders and managers identified that they would speak with the young people's families and social workers about the use of monitoring and surveillance devices. These discussions have not progressed swiftly enough.

There are no concerns relating to child sexual exploitation, young people going missing or bullying. Restraint is only used as a last resort and leaders and managers evaluate the use of restraint, look for triggers and trends, and ensure that the measure used is appropriate. Staff receive training in the home's preferred method of de-escalation and restraint. Sanctions are rarely imposed.

Leaders and managers ensure that young people stay in a safe environment. Regular checks are undertaken on the moving and handling equipment and the passenger lift and stair lift.

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

Since the last inspection, senior leaders have failed to follow safeguarding procedures and ensure that all allegations or suspicions of harm are shared with the appropriate agencies, including Ofsted. This weakness has been acknowledged by senior leaders, and lessons have been learned.

The registered manager is currently away from the home. In her absence, the acting manager is in day-to-day charge of the home and is regularly monitoring the quality of care provided. Since the last inspection, a review of the quality of care has been undertaken. However, this report is not evaluative and does not refer to the outcomes of the quality of care provided to young people, or how improvements can be made. Although leaders and managers consult with young people about the quality of care, an evaluation of their feedback is not included in this report. In addition, the most recent quality assurance report has not been sent to Ofsted.

Regular visits by the independent visitor continue to take place. The quality of reports completed after these visits has improved. However, leaders and managers are working to make further improvements to these reports.

Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have taken action to address a number of the concerns identified at the previous inspection. In addition, the quality of young people's placement plans and risk assessments have improved. The newly introduced plans provide staff with detailed guidance on how the young person's needs are to be met.

Significant building work has commenced to improve the bathroom facilities for young people. Further improvements for the remaining bathing facilities are required. However, there is no clear plan of action for this work to commence. In addition, not all areas of the environment have a homely appearance. Some communal areas appear worn and tired. The dining area also contains medication cupboards, monitoring devices, and storage facilities. Some young people's bedrooms lack soft furnishings, and some have broken window blinds.

There has been one recorded complaint since the last inspection. Leaders and managers ensure that complaints are responded to appropriately.

Leaders and managers follow safer recruitment policies when selecting new staff. However, the application form that is currently used does not allow candidates to complete a full declaration of their education and attainments, and their full employment history.

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 who 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: SC032439

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Wiltshire Council, Director of Social Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LE

Responsible individual: Carolyn Godfrey

Registered manager: Tina Baker

Inspectors

David Kidner, social care inspector
Michelle Oxley, social care inspector

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