

SC033174

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a local authority. The home provides care for up to five children aged between 10 and 17 years; 16 is the maximum age on admission. The provider states that they offer residential care with therapeutic emphasis and multi-agency involvement to help children and young people recover from experiences that have left them vulnerable and disrupted their primary relationships.

At the time of inspection, the home was operating outside its statement of purpose by providing care beyond its stated emergency/short-term model.

There has been no registered manager since 23 February 2021.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 August 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 26 April 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: Inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Following the full inspection on 26 April 2022, a restriction notice was issued, in addition to four compliance notices. At a monitoring visit on 8 June 2022, the compliance notices were found to be met and the restriction notice was subsequently lifted.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/04/2022	Full	Inadequate
26/04/2021	Full	Good
30/10/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/05/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff work in partnership with a range of professionals to understand and meet the needs of children. While the purpose of the home is for children to live there on a short-term basis for assessment, some children have stayed beyond the assessment period. Staff have adapted to provide individualised care and remain committed to supporting children's progress and development.

The children enjoy a varied range of activities and have good experiences. Staff provide varied experiences that help to create positive memories for children. For example, one child was taken by staff on a short break with their sibling to strengthen their relationship. One child has a pet and showed staff how to care for this kind of animal, providing further opportunities to build relationships. A recent development, where three regular agency workers have been given six-month contracts, provides further opportunity for consistent care.

Staff ensure that health appointments are made and children are supported to attend. They support children to make healthy meal choices and fresh fruit and vegetables are readily available. Children have opportunities to play sport in the grounds of the home as well as at local sports clubs. For example, one child expressed an interest in horses and in playing football. Staff supported them to start equine therapy and encouraged them to join a football club.

Staff recognise the importance of education and a room is set aside in the home for this purpose. One child was able to access school to take their GCSE exams. Staff arranged for a careers adviser to come to the home and talk to this child and, as a result, the child successfully applied for a college place independently. Through work with a multi-agency group, staff are promoting and encouraging the reintegration of another child into education. There is limited success so far but staff show a clear commitment to making progress in this area.

Professionals reported positive experiences with staff and value their contribution to meetings about the children. A psychologist supports the team with their parenting model, with a focus on understanding children's behaviours and strengthening relationships. Children have informal one-to-one meetings with staff, allowing for relaxed discussion. There is a clear plan in place to reintroduce house meetings, which will provide additional opportunity for children to express their views.

Due to the emergency and short-term nature of the model of care at this home, children's moves into the home are now managed with more caution. The needs of children already in the home are considered and staff reported an improved matching process. As a result, children who moved into the home after the restriction was lifted have been successfully assessed and moved on to longer-term care arrangements. Staff prepared one child to move on to semi-independent living.

This was well managed and the young person remains in contact with the home and staff continue to offer support.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Risk assessments address the safety needs of children and are implemented by staff. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed to ensure that the most up-to-date information is available. Staff work with children about how to keep themselves safe.

The procedure for the management of children who go missing is followed well by staff. Staff go to great lengths to retrieve children who go missing and work closely with the police to ensure their safe return. The close partnership working with a range of professionals means that children who are at risk of exploitation are well known and safety plans put in place to reduce this risk. One child is offered support by an external service to improve their understanding of the risks that they take.

Staff have received training that meets the needs of the children they care for. There has been a reduction in the use of physical intervention and all staff have received training in the model that they use. As a result, staff are better prepared to work with some of the complex needs of the children that they care for.

Plans are in place which are specific to each child to promote positive behaviour. Boundaries help the children to know what is expected of them in terms of their behaviour. Staff understand the importance of consistency and children know about consequences and reparation. For instance, following a negative incident, one child was advised what they needed to do to earn a beauty treatment.

Safeguarding arrangements are in place to protect children. Staff showed that they understand the processes for the management of allegations. However, not all significant events are reported. On one occasion, an injury to a child was not reported to Ofsted. This means that the regulator was not able to review and form an opinion on the incident. Managers accept that this should have been notified.

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

There has been no registered manager since February 2021. While three managers have been recruited since then, no manager has been registered. Leaders have not ensured that there has been a consistent manager for this home. As a result, staff and children have not experienced the stability required for continuous improvements in the living and working environment.

Leaders and managers have not provided a review of quality of care report to cover the last 10 months. This means that the regulator has not been able to review in advance of this inspection how the home is being monitored. This is a missed opportunity for leaders and managers to demonstrate the progress that the home has made and to consider the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.

Some staff reported poor communication and support from leaders and managers. Some have been off work due to stress and threats of violence from a child, for which they feel unsupported.

Managers work closely with a range of professionals to promote positive outcomes for children. They take effective action when the responses from other services do not meet the needs of the children.

Leaders and managers have ensured the regular supervision of staff. The quality of these supervisions is good, and sessions provide challenge to staff practice. Difficult conversations happen in supervisions, and most staff value the time, space and opportunity to develop. A comprehensive review of development needs has resulted in a clear training plan for all staff. Informal practice discussions focus on areas for growth and development.

The home is not achieving its aims and objectives in terms of placements. The model changed to providing care for 72 hours, with extension to four weeks. However, due to the lack of suitable onward long-term care arrangements, children have lived at the home for several months. This can affect their ability to invest in where they live.

Leaders and managers work together to promote equality and diversity. Difference is celebrated. The racially abusive language of children identified at the last inspection is now immediately challenged by staff. There has been a significant reduction in this behaviour, however, there are still some incidents. The psychologist has offered one-to-one sessions to anyone experiencing racial abuse in the workplace, but staff have not made use of this offer.

Leaders and managers encourage the views and participation of children. Children helped to design the garden and have been involved in growing fruit and vegetables. A request for a trampoline and swimming pool was granted, all of which will benefit other children who come to live at the home.

Leaders and managers have responded swiftly and effectively to the requirements made at the last inspection. The home is on a journey of growth and improvement and some staff reported that it is a nicer place to work.

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
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e))	30 September 2022
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person	30 September 2022

intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). 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; and make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))	
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership; does not satisfy regulation 28; or is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of— the name of the person so appointed; and the date on which the appointment takes effect. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii) (2)(a)(b))	30 September 2022

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: SC033174

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Registered provider address: 3rd Floor, Elizabeth II Court North, The Castle,
Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG

Responsible individual: John Stacey

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Vevene Muhammad, Social Care Inspector

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