

# SC033174

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This is a local authority children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to five children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

**Inspection dates:** 5 to 6 September 2017

**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:** 21 November 2016

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:**

None

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The managers and the staff have developed close working relationships with other professionals, which ensures that there is an effective multi-disciplinary approach to supporting and safeguarding the young people.

- Young people are able to develop positive relationships with the adults who care for them. Support from the members of staff enables the young people to reflect upon their behaviours and begin to make positive choices.
- Staff support the young people to improve their relationships with their families, and this helps to build on young people's sense of belonging and self-esteem.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Managers and senior leaders have not considered the compatibility of young people. Consequently, there has been an escalation in young people's challenging and risk-taking behaviour.
- Senior leaders have made decisions to place young people in the home in an emergency, and only sharing limited information with the manager. As a result, the manager has been unable to assess if the home can meet the young people's needs or carry out a risk assessment to protect the new young person and others living in the home.
- Senior leaders acted outside the home's statement of purpose when admitting an emergency placement.
- Risk assessments do not state the actions the staff should take to minimise risks to young people.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 21/11/2016      | Full            | Good                    |
| 29/03/2016      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 10/11/2015      | Full            | Good                    |
| 12/03/2015      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |

## 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   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person is required to:</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (2)(c))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 17/10/2017 |
| <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person is required to:</p> <p>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;</p> <p>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other. This applies to the management of relationships between young people in the home.</p> <p>ensure that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 2(a) (i and iv) 2(b))</p> <p>In particular, risk assessments must reflect the actions the staff should take to safeguard the young people. The managers must ensure that new and existing young people are compatible when considering a new placement and evidence their decision-making.</p> | 17/10/2017 |
| <p>The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it. (Regulation 16 (3) (a))</p> <p>In particular, clarify the arrangements for emergency placements.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 17/10/2017 |
| <p>Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (5))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 17/10/2017 |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 17/10/2017 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (3) (d))                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |            |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>(a) 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—</p> <p>(i) the name of the child;</p> <p>(ii) details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>(iii) the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>(iv) a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>(v) details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>(vi) the name of the person who used the measure (“the user”), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>(vii) the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>(viii) a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure.</p> <p>(b) 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”)—</p> <p>(i) has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>(ii) has signed the record to confirm it is accurate.</p> <p>(c) within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.</p> <p>(Regulation 35 (3) (a) (i) (ii) (iii) (iv) (v) (vi) (vii) (vii) (b) (i) (ii) (c))</p> | 17/10/2017 |
| <p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4) (b))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 17/10/2017 |

## Recommendations

- The registered person must should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of regulation 16 schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- Under regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home a least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home’s location and strategies for managing these. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 64, paragraph

15.1)

- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30) In particular, evidence when a return home interview has been requested from and completed by the local authority.

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Consistent support and regular reflection on the effectiveness of care plans ensures that the staff's strategies are successful in enabling the young people to make progress in their education, social interactions and independence skills.

Education is valued and its importance is promoted. Staff maintain effective links with the local authority's virtual headteacher and with local schools to ensure that the young people continue to have access to appropriate educational placements. The majority of the young people are engaged in full-time education. For the young people who are not, the staff challenge and advocate on their behalf to help the young people to obtain the necessary support to engage and achieve in education.

A thorough knowledge and understanding of psychological approaches provides the staff with a greater insight into the young people and informs the staff's practice. Consequently, the staff engage effectively with the young people and enable them to form positive attachments with adults, which they have felt unable to do previously. The young people trust the staff; they feel able to discuss their feelings and worries with the staff who, in turn, provide sensitive guidance and advice.

Staff nurture good relationships with the young people's families to ensure that they maintain important relationships. With the staff's guidance, the young people have been able to improve their relationships with their family, leading to increased visits and overnight stays at home. Staff have developed a good rapport with parents. One parent commented that the 'staff are always supportive and we have good communication... We work as a team to support [my child].'

Young people take advantage of opportunities to try new things, go to new places and develop new talents. The staff encourage the young people to pursue their individual interests. As a result, the young people have joined the army cadets and sports clubs. Consequently, the young people enrich and widen their social experiences and build on their self-confidence and self-esteem.

A holistic approach using the 'emotional warmth' model of care enables the young people to learn to manage their emotions and behaviours. Staff work closely with the

home's attached educational psychologist and the child and adolescent mental health therapist to assess young people's psychological needs and to implement the most effective intervention based on current research and practice.

Close attention to the young people's health needs and effective liaison with health professionals support the young people to improve their awareness and to take responsibility for their health needs.

Young people are developing their skills in preparation for adult life. Through effective care planning, the staff provide the young people with opportunities to build confidence in applying independence skills such as budgeting and meal preparation. Staff provide good support and guidance to the young people if they move on to semi-independent accommodation.

Planned introductions and moves into the home are not managed consistently. In some cases, the managers and the staff are not informed of a young person's placement until the day of their arrival. Often, the manager and the staff do not receive the required information to plan for the young person's care or to carry out thorough risk assessments to ensure the safety of the young person and others within the home.

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

Effective relationships with partner agencies, such as the police, support managers to escalate concerns regarding the young people's safety. Managers ensure that all professionals take a joint responsibility in evaluating the causes of any significant rise in serious incidents and in devising risk-management strategies. The staff team has worked closely with the home's attached educational psychologist and child and adolescent mental health service worker to ensure an informed, consistent response to young people's challenging behaviour. This holistic approach has ensured that effective action has been taken to protect the young people, resulting in a recent reduction in incidents of violent, missing and criminal behaviours.

There have been a number of incidents which required police intervention. These interventions have been appropriate due to the levels of aggression, violence and damage to property. Staff have worked closely with the police and the youth offending team to help the young people reflect on the impact of their behaviours. However, records of physical interventions and sanctions are poor and do not contain all the required information. This includes the young people's views on incidents and consequences. The lack of information compromises the manager's ability to evaluate the effectiveness of the young people's behaviour plans and to monitor the staff's practice.

Staff respond to missing from care episodes well, deploying a managed and coordinated approach. Staff implement the missing from care policy and the young person's missing from care protocol carefully. The local police are notified and collaborate with the staff to ensure the safe return of young people. However, records do not demonstrate if return home interviews have been requested or whether they have taken place. This is a

missed opportunity for professionals to understand why the incident of missing from care occurred and better inform subsequent risk-management strategies.

Poor matching has resulted in challenging relationships between some of the young people and there have been some instances of bullying. Staff have recognised and challenged such behaviour, encouraging the instigators of the bullying to reflect on their behaviour and the impact on the victim.

New or inexperienced staff are not provided with the necessary information to safeguard the young people effectively. Young people's risk assessments do not reflect the actions the staff take to protect them. Information in risk-management strategies is insufficient and does not cover all of a young person's risk factors. The home has in place a detailed area risk assessment, which informs staff of local crime trends and areas where risk is higher. However, this document has not been updated after incidents and therefore does not provide a current picture of all known risks.

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

The young people placed together have not all been genuinely compatible, resulting in an escalation of incidents. Managers and senior leaders have failed to consider how the young people's risks and behaviours might affect one another. Staff and a police officer commented that they did not feel the young people within the home were a 'good mix'. The placing of incompatible young people has resulted in a significant escalation in the violent, missing and criminal behaviour of two young people and resulted in one young person becoming a victim of bullying.

Several serious incidents have not been reported to the regulator. Consequently, the regulator is unable to monitor and evaluate practice to ensure that all appropriate actions had taken place to protect the young people.

Senior leaders directed the manager to admit a young person as an emergency placement. Insufficient information was shared with the manager prior to and since the admission of the young person. Consequently, the manager and her staff team are unable to determine whether the home can meet the young person's needs and keep the young person and others safe. This compromises the well-being and safety of everyone in the home. The actions of senior leaders forced the home to operate outside its statement of purpose because the conditions for accepting such placements were not in place. Within the statement, the procedures for emergency admission are contradictory and do not provide clear guidance on what is classed as an emergency admission and when one can occur.

Critical analysis by the independent person is used proactively to improve the quality of care. However, the regulator does not receive these reports in a timely fashion, hindering the regulator's ability to monitor practice.

The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. However, the home has faced an unsettled time with numerous significant incidents. This has affected the manager's ability to address areas that require improvements. As

such, requirements made at the previous inspection have not been met. The manager is aware of this and has plans in place to address them.

Complaints are taken seriously and responded to appropriately. However, it is not clear from complaint records whether matters are resolved to the young people's satisfaction.

The organisation's workforce training strategy does not cover the information required by guidance, and provides a limited overview of the management structure and expectations for the staff. Managers do not have an effective overview of staff training. This hinders the manager's ability to identify any shortfalls in staff's skills and knowledge. All staff who are required to have completed, or are in the process of completing, the level 3 diploma as required by regulation. However, the manager is yet to enrol on the required level 5 training.

Current recruitment practice does not ensure that only appropriately vetted staff are employed to work with young people. Deficiencies include not verifying the reasons why candidates have left previous employment involving work with children or vulnerable adults as required by regulation.

Managers and staff have a good knowledge and insight into each young person. The staff know what is best for the young people in their care. They will challenge and advocate on each young person's behalf to ensure that they receive the support they need to develop. Managers and staff have experienced extremely violent and aggressive behaviours from some young people, but they have remained committed to providing good quality of care. Staff have worked closely with other agencies and have used resources creatively to meet each young person's needs and prepare them for adulthood.

## **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:** SC033174

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider address:** Hampshire County Council, The Castle, Winchester  
SO23 8UG

**Responsible individual:** Susan Lomax

**Registered manager:** Post vacant  
Sarah Harris

## Inspector

Melissa McMillan, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2017