

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	14/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC03317
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Hampshire County Council
Registered person address	Hampshire County Council, The Castle, WINCHESTER, Hampshire SO23 8ZB

Responsible individual	Susan Lomax
Registered manager	Sarah Harris
Inspector	Nicola Bennett

Inspection date	14/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. The manager of the home, who has substantial experience, has been in post for two months. During this short period, she has established a positive and supportive work environment for the staff team, utilising her skills and experience to manage day-to-day decision making and encouraging ideas from the team to inform planning and activities for the young people. Staff spoken to are very positive about the new manager and her approach. The manager has clear ideas and plans to improve the homeliness, decoration and warmth of the home. Young people are invited to be involved in the decoration of their home, such as choosing the colour of paint for their room and furnishings. The provider is opening a number of new children's homes in the coming months and some staff will be moving to these new homes. Inevitably, this will have an impact on the young people; however, this is already being sensitively addressed with those who will be particularly affected, to minimise the impact on them. The requirements from the last inspection have been met. Of the four young people in the home, three now have suitable education or training opportunities that reflect their current needs and circumstances. The fourth young person has experienced an unsettled period, which resulted in her exclusion from college in January. Staff from the home are working with the young person and her parents to identify suitable employment, education or training. There is evidence that the staff team has developed positive relationships with the young people, who each have complex needs, utilising the home's chosen therapeutic approach. Relationships between the young people continue to be challenging and there has been a recent issue of one young person being bullied by two other residents. This has been addressed sensitively by the staff and the two young people have been supported to reflect on their behaviour and the impact on the other resident. Use of restorative justice practices in response to incidents has been effective in providing young people with the opportunity to reflect on, and take responsibility for, their actions. Staff and managers know the young people well and young people's key workers are committed and knowledgeable about their needs, interests and behaviours. Staff utilise a range of techniques to manage and improve behaviour and have put in place effective safeguarding arrangements that allow for young people to develop their confidence and improve self-regulation of behaviour. Staff work closely with external and internal professionals to improve the young people's emotional health	

and young people are supported to pursue their individual interests. This includes activities outside of the home such as free running, swimming, football, dance and exercise classes. Celebration of achievements of the young people have started to be introduced, for example a theatre trip that took place recently. Three young people will become adults within the next 18 months and there is recognition that they will need to develop self-care and independent living skills, and build their resilience in preparation for adulthood, for which clear action plans are required.

Medications for children are kept in a locked cabinet in the staff office. Each young person has a container for their medication. There are also a number of medicines that are generic and have been dispensed to different children at different times, for example head lice treatment, cough and cold medicine, and liquid paracetamol. It is, therefore, not possible to ensure the oversight of the amounts dispensed and retained. The book for the dispensing of medication is not easy to follow and there have been instances where the signing for dispensing of medication by a second member of staff has been after the event. Management have recently given direction that the young person can sign for receipt of their medication in the absence of a second member of staff. However, it is not clear whether this is in keeping with the provider's wider guidance, or whether the young people in question are able to give informed consent.

Records of training undertaken by staff are both electronic and held in paper files. Development needs are included in the standard supervision agenda and considered in supervision sessions. However, due to the various records and systems in place, it is not possible to have a coherent picture of the training that staff have undertaken, or whether required refresher training has taken place. Therefore, the manager cannot be assured that staff are up to date with required mandatory training, including sexual exploitation and safeguarding.

Good-quality, up-to-date risk assessments are in place that reflect young people's circumstances. Behaviour management plans are easy to follow and set out clearly the interests, views and needs of the young people. Staff are actively involved in the reviews of children and have established good working relationships with social workers, the designated officer and local police, who regularly visit the home and will speak with the young people about particular issues, such as recent bullying incidents and damage to property. The manager has started to establish positive and collaborative links with parents and/or carers of the young people to support contact and consistency of approach to the care and management of the young people.

Two young people are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and are engaging in risky behaviours online, both in and outside of the children's home. The risk assessments in place do not sufficiently address this risk.

Two young people display considerable and regular challenging, aggressive and dangerous behaviour, both to themselves and other residents and staff. This has resulted in police attendance at the home on a number of occasions. There have only been a low number of physical restraints used since the last inspection, one which is the subject of investigation as an allegation against a member of staff. De-

escalation techniques and sanctions have been effective in managing behaviour, as well as in addressing incidents of potential harm to both staff and young people themselves in the majority of incidents. Damage to walls, windows, lights and furnishings occur often; however, these items are replaced or fixed on a regular basis. On the day of inspection, decorators were painting internal walls and the home was tidy and clean.

Incidents are recorded in a timely way by staff, and include an entry of the effectiveness of any consequence on the young person by a member of staff, and these are reviewed regularly by the manager. However, none of the recorded incidents were signed by the young person as an accurate record of events. There is also no evidence that, following physical restraint, young people are given the opportunity to talk about their experience, or how such incidents are reviewed against and inform behaviour management plans.

The views of the young people are considered using complaints and 'grumbles' sheets, which are responded to appropriately by staff. Meetings between young people and staff take place each month and advocacy is available for the young people whenever they request this. Volunteers also come to the home regularly and spend time with specific young people.

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.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/11/2016	CH - Full	Good
29/03/2016	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10/11/2015	CH - Full	Good
13/03/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

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 (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
23. Medicines The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1))	30/04/2017
13. The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person is required to: (2) (c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (2)(c))	30/04/2017
7. The children's views, wishes and feelings standard In order to meet the child's views, wishes and feeling standard, the registered person is required to: (i) ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what the registered person judges to be in the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and welfare; (ii) help each child to express their views, wishes and feelings; (iii) help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child; (iv) regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care. (Regulation 7 (a)(i, ii, iii, iv))	30/04/2017
12. The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person is required to:	31/05/2017

2 (a)

(i) 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;

(ii) help each child to understand how to keep safe;

(b) 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 ii) 2(b))

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection, 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

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

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