

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. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five children aged between ten and 17; 16 is the maximum age on admission. According to the home's statement of purpose, it offers residential care with therapeutic emphasis and multi-agency involvement, to help children recover from experiences which have rendered them vulnerable and disrupted from their primary relationships.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 2017.

Inspection dates: 14 to 15 May 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 6 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/02/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/08/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/09/2017	Full	Good
21/11/2016	Full	Good

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 recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(3)(a)(d))	10/07/2019
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)) This particularly refers to ensuring that the registered manager has an up-to-date system for monitoring staff training and that staff have completed the organisation's required training within the expected timescale.	10/07/2019
The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35(3)(b)(ii))	10/07/2019
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.	10/07/2019

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to 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 (1)(2)(b))

This particularly refers to ensuring that children are not exposed to inappropriate adult television content and that internet access is managed in a way that ensures reasonable duty of care in providing online age-appropriate safeguarding.

Inspection judgements

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

Children enjoy living at this home. Staff provide child-centred care and support which have a positive impact on the children's lives. However, shortfalls in recognising and addressing safeguarding risks have undermined the overall quality and experience of care for some of the children.

Staff encourage and support the children to achieve their academic potential. There are lots of books and education resources in the home. One child expressed how much she enjoyed the staff reading to her. Children attend a variety of educational provisions, some on a part-time basis. When children are not at school, staff make sure that they complete schoolwork or are engaging in educational activities during school hours. Staff consider the children's starting points and understand that some children will make academic progress in small steps.

Staff find new experiences for the children to try, as well as supporting them to attend activities that they already enjoy. Children take part in a wide range of life-enhancing activities, such as holidays abroad and horse riding. One child discussed how she hoped her passion for horses would lead to volunteering and part-time work opportunities. Staff recognise that enrichment and leisure opportunities increase children's confidence and life skills.

Transitions for the children when they join and leave the home are planned and led by their needs. When children have left the home, the staff maintain appropriate links. For example, the staff continue to send birthday and Christmas cards. Staff invite children and young people back for Sunday dinners and summer barbecues. One staff member recently attended a young person's wedding. This sends a message to children that they are valued and that their well-being is important to the staff.

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

improvement to be good

Weak leadership and insufficient digital skills technological awareness have led to shortfalls in safeguarding practice. Some children have been able to watch inappropriate adult content on their televisions and internet-enabled devices. The registered manager described one child as 'frozen' with fear after watching a horror film overnight in her bedroom. The registered manager and staff failed to act after this incident. Consequently, the child was able to continue to watch her television overnight, while staff slept.

The registered manager and the staff have not taken preventative measures to make sure that parental controls have been put on all the televisions and internet-enabled devices. As a result, a child was potentially able to view sexualised images advertised overnight on adult-only channels. The registered manager rectified this during the inspection.

The home has its own internal wireless broadband set up with an appropriate level of filtering. Each child agrees for the staff to track their social media use. Staff support children to undertake a vocational qualification in relation to internet safety. This is followed up through ongoing social media safety work with the children. However, staff were unaware whether a phone contract set up by a parent for a child had appropriate blocks for unsuitable content. This means the child's internet access was not managed in a way that ensured a reasonable duty of care in providing online age-appropriate safeguarding.

Staff recognise and celebrate the children's positive behaviours. Staff are effective at de-escalating tensions and restraint is used infrequently. However, some records of restraint have not been signed by the registered manager within the required timeframes. This lack of scrutiny undermines management oversight in ensuring timely, appropriate and proportionate practice.

Children are cared for by staff trained in an 'emotional warmth' model of care. Acceptance and purposeful kindness underpin this approach. Staff are supported in their roles by a child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) practitioner and an educational psychologist who are linked to the home. Staff attend monthly multi-agency meetings to reflect and develop a deeper insight into the emotional needs of each child. As a result, the children's emotional health and well-being needs are prioritised and responded to well by the staff.

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

Staff have access to a wide-ranging training programme. However, the registered manager's system for monitoring staff training is poor. Records are not kept up to date, and show that some staff have not completed the organisation's required training within the expected timescale. Concerns about non-completion of training have not been addressed appropriately. This means that the registered manager cannot be confident that the staff team has the necessary skills to meet the specific needs of the children.

The home is properly staffed and resourced. Staff feel well supported and there is good morale in the home. However, shortfalls in safer recruitment were found in one file

sampled. These related to gaps in employment history and a lack of robust consideration and assessment of an applicant's suitability.

The registered manager and leaders work well with the wider professional network. Feedback from a social worker about the communication between herself, the staff and the registered manager was positive. The registered manager advocates for the children, to ensure that others play their role and deliver the high-quality support that is needed.

The registered manager and leaders promote an inclusive ethos at the home. Staff are mindful of children's cultures and celebrate diversity. Staff's practice towards children reflects these values. Consequently, children develop an understanding of equality and tolerance of others. This assists the children to develop a positive self-view and a sense of their unique identity.

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: Hampshire County Council

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

Responsible individual: John Stacey

Registered manager: Sarah Harris

Inspectors

Anne-Marie Davies, social care inspector

Daniel Healy, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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