

SC033174

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a local authority. The home was registered to care for one child up until April 2024. Due to a change in its registration, the home is now able to care for up to four children. At the time of this inspection, four children were living in the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 30 January 2024.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 February 2025

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: 13 February 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/02/2024	Full	Good
23/05/2023	Full	Inadequate
02/08/2022	Full	Good
26/04/2022	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children collectively say the home is 'OK' to live in. The staff have created an environment that is comfortable and homely. The home is clean and well furnished for the children to enjoy. There is an array of toys, games and crafts on offer for children to play with. Children enjoy the outdoor space to play football and basketball and go on their bikes and scooters. This provides children with a sense of safety, security and comfort.

Children have good relationships with the staff who care for them. Children and staff enjoy fun activities and interactions with each other. Consequently, children have built positive attachments and trusting relationships with staff, enabling them to feel settled and at ease.

Children are making progress in education engagement, home learning and managing their emotions. Children engage in daily routines and attend important healthcare appointments. Children are growing in confidence and esteem.

Children can see their families and those who are significant to them. For example, some children have been supported to keep in touch with their former foster carers. Reunification plans are under way for some children, and staff have built positive relationships with parents. This reassures children that staff support their care plan and are invested in preparing them for their next step.

Children in the home are supported to develop positive relationships with each other, and they generally get along well. Children are supported to play together and they enjoy playing board games with each other and staff. This provides opportunities to have fun, practise turn-taking and follow game rules.

The home has steadily increased the number of children they can care for, from one to four children. Prior to the home being at full capacity, there were times when children were placed in an emergency. Consideration has not always been given to the home's statement of purpose and the range of children's needs the staff are equipped to care for. This has the potential to undermine the staff's ability to provide good-quality care and stability within the home.

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

The home previously had a focus on caring for younger-aged children. Staff have completed relevant courses and been given opportunities to further develop their practice in caring for pre-teen children.

The children do not go missing from home. However, staff are familiar with what to do and children's individual protocols should this happen.

Complaints that are raised by children are managed well. They are promptly investigated, and outcomes are shared with children. This ensures children see that their complaint is taken seriously and that their voices are heard.

Risks are well known and understood by staff. Clear, up-to-date risk assessments are held and there are good plans in place to keep children safe. Staff manage children's internet safety appropriately and talk to them about online risks. This helps to safeguard children.

Staff use consistent and effective behaviour management strategies. This has resulted in a decrease in incidents and use of physical interventions. Incidents are recorded well and shared with appropriate professionals. However, there is inconsistent management oversight of these incidents to ensure that all staff fully understand children's cues and behaviours, and that staff communicate well with each other during incidents.

Staff have generally supported children well and in line with their behaviour support plans. However, on one occasion children were not appropriately supervised for a short period of time. This resulted in a child becoming distressed, and an allegation of harm to them by other children. Staff failed to notify senior leaders of the incident until the following day.

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

The child-centred registered manager has a good understanding of the needs of the children and is a strong advocate for them. However, management oversight is not consistently sufficiently strong.

The manager's oversight of restraint records lacks depth and professional curiosity. Some records of physical restraint had no management oversight within the required time frame. Furthermore, records of debriefs with children after incidents are not of a consistently adequate standard. Consequently, it is not always clear or easy to understand how staff have supported children following incidents to explore their feelings and the level of restorative work that occurred.

The manager ensures that the children are likely to benefit from the care the home offers before the children move in. However, risks between children are not explicitly explored to ensure compatibility. This has the potential to mean that risks relating to the children as a group, or the influence and vulnerability between children, are not well understood. In turn, this has the potential to undermine children's safety and stability in the home.

Some staff highlight struggles in communication, but staff are generally positive about working at the home. Staff benefit from regular supervision. However, the manager has not completed staff appraisals. This has undermined the manager's ability to celebrate staff's strengths and identify areas of professional development.

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, The 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 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 ensure— that staff— have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii))	14 May 2025
The registered person must ensure that— 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— 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")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and	14 May 2025

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. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
--	--

Recommendations

- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- The registered person should ensure that the information set out in the statement of purpose is clear. The statement of purpose is an essential part of the process of agreement between the registered person and the placing authority that a placement in that home is the right one for that child, and that the home will be able to respond effectively to the child's assessed needs. Emergency admissions should not be taken unless the home's statement of purpose and its capacity and support systems mean that it has the capability to care for children admitted at very short notice while continuing to offer high-quality care to children already living in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.6)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. This appraisal should take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. As part of the performance management process, poor performance should be addressed by a timely plan to bring about improvement. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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: The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UG

Responsible individual: Deborah Price

Registered manager: Caron Chatfield

Inspector

Karen Flanagan de Martinez, 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 looked after children, 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.

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, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025