

SC034211

Registered provider: Bristol City Council

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local authority. The home provides accommodation and personal care for up to four children and young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection date: 3 December 2018

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 27 June 2018

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 last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

The home has declined in effectiveness because there are continuing concerns about the mix of children and young people. The admission of a second child in September 2018 led to a sharp deterioration in the children's behaviour. There were some very serious incidents. The newly admitted child was moved to another placement after eight days. This was disruptive for both children. There is limited evidence following this inspection that the approach to matching children has improved.

The staff are caring and supportive. However, they have not received specialised training to help them to meet the present child's identified needs. Until the inspection, there were no immediate plans to provide this training. Also, there are no plans in place to provide the child with therapy to help with their behaviour. A requirement has been

made.

The system for recording safeguarding incidents is not sufficiently rigorous to support children's safety. Staff continue to use health and safety forms which are designed to report accidents and injuries to staff. These forms are not child-centred in design. There is nowhere on the form to record a child's name, sufficient detail about the incident or to allow staff and the manager to reflect on practice.

One incident, which could have had significant safeguarding implications, was passed on to the social worker and the police at the time. However, there is no clear recorded narrative for this incident to provide evidence of the staff's actions. The unsuitability of these forms for recording children's incidents has been raised at previous inspections.

Staff carry out very few restraints. However, when there are serious incidents, the style of recording is, in some instances, judgemental and places responsibility on the children for their behaviour. A recommendation has been made to improve recording.

The quality of the environment has much improved in recent years. Some areas are attractive and well suited to the children's needs. However, there are still some institutional features. For example, the home has several fire signs which would not be present in a domestic dwelling. Damage to the office door has not been repaired. A recommendation has been made.

The two recommendations made at the last inspection have both been repeated. One recommendation was to ensure that children are in full-time education. The registered manager and staff have already made good progress in starting to meet the new child's educational needs, but it is too early to evaluate the impact on the child.

The second recommendation concerned gaps in employment history for a member of staff. Although the file has been reviewed and some gaps have been accounted for, there remains one lengthy gap in employment history. Management monitoring had not identified this shortfall.

There are several positive elements in the home. The registered manager and staff work hard to establish relationships with children. A child who has recently moved on was keeping in touch with staff. He clearly saw the home as a place where he could be safe.

Staff hold productive 'important conversations' with children. For example, they undertook a great deal of direct work to prepare this child for his move out of county.

The staff are very caring and supportive towards children's families. During the inspection, staff helped family members to attend an important meeting to keep in contact with their child.

At the last inspection, the home was required to ensure that staff complete fire safety checks in a timely manner. Fire alarm tests are now completed weekly, so this requirement is met. The newly admitted child said that he has been part of a fire drill

and that he is aware of how to leave the building in an emergency.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/06/2018	Full	Good
04/10/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
03/05/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
21/12/2016	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 quality and purpose of care standard The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff protect and promote each child's welfare; provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background and help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect. (Regulation 6 (1)(2)(b)(ii)(iv)(v)) This is with particular reference to ensuring that children placed in the home are suitably matched, that they receive therapeutic support to help them with their life experiences and that the staff receive specific training to help them to meet each child's individual needs.	31/01/2019

Recommendations

- Ensure that children's homes are nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children. They will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Ensure that children are in full-time education whilst they are of compulsory school age. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.14)
- Ensure that the company maintains good employment practice. The registered person must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1) In particular, record details of reference verification conversations with referees. Also, ensure that full employment history is recorded in months as well as years.
- Ensure that the home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. Children and their parents should be supported to understand the nature of records kept by the home and how to access them. Staff should understand their important role in encouraging the child to reflect on and understand their history, according to their age and understanding. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5) In particular, ensure that the recording of incidents is rigorous and child-centred and that it is in a format which can be easily read and monitored.

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.

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.

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: SC034211

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: City Hall, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TR

Responsible individual: James Beardall

Registered manager: Patricia Harding

Inspector(s)

Heather Chaplin, social care inspector

Tina Maddison, social care inspector

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