

SC034211

Bristol City Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home is registered for up to four children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home currently accommodates one child and one young adult.

Inspection date: 24 January 2018

This monitoring visit

At the interim inspection on 5 October 2017, the home was found to have declined in effectiveness. The shortfalls found resulted in a compliance notice, issued on 12 October 2017.

On 28 November 2017, Ofsted carried out a monitoring visit to assess progress against the compliance notice. That inspection found that the registered person had taken some action to comply with the requirements of the compliance notice. However, further shortfalls were identified with the leadership and management of the home.

A new compliance notice was issued on 12 December 2017. This was because:

- There was a shortage of permanent staff for the home, which had an impact on children's safety.
- There was much use of agency and casual staff, which did not provide the children with consistent care.
- The relationship between the children was poor, and the children had a detrimental influence on each other. As a result, it was not possible to keep the children safe.

The present monitoring visit is to assess progress against this second notice. The inspector also reviewed the progress of the child and young adult in the home in relation to this notice.

Since the last monitoring visit, one of the children has been moved to another home within the local authority. Another young person, who was nearly 18 years of age at the time of admission, was moved into the home as a temporary measure. This young woman has now had her 18th birthday.

There have also been management changes since the last monitoring visit. The registered manager was recalled from her secondment. She has taken back the day-to-day management of the home. This has been reassuring for the staff team and the child, with whom she has a good relationship.

This monitoring visit found that good progress had been made against the compliance notice. In addition, the home has met the element of the requirement under quality standard 13 that related to inoperative fire door closures on two doors in the home. This has now been remedied and the door closures are in working order. This means that the requirement under this quality standard is fully met and has not been repeated.

Two remaining requirements under regulations 32 and 36, which were not subject to the compliance notice, were not evaluated on this occasion. These will be followed up at the next full inspection.

1. The registered person was required to increase the number of substantive staff working regularly in the home.

This element of the compliance notice is met.

The temporary closure of another home operated by this local authority has meant that four of their permanent staff have come to work in this home. There is a long-term plan for these staff members to return to their usual children's home, but this cannot take place until a new registered manager is appointed for that home. The staff are therefore available for work in this home at least until the end of February.

Several staff remain off sick, although two are due to return in the near future. Sickness is now being actively managed to support staff and increase the continuity of care for the children and young people.

2. The registered person was required to reduce the use of agency and casual staff.

The home has substantially met this element of the notice. For example, no agency staff are currently being used at all. This is a very positive development.

The local authority employs a team of casual staff. They are an important asset to the children's homes. There are changes planned to improve how this resource is

managed. These changes should have a positive effect on the outcomes for children:

- Casual staff are already assigned to individual teams. There are five casual staff for each of the children's homes.
- In this home, the registered manager is intending to review the casual staff team's training needs. This will happen when her deputy returns from sickness absence, which is likely to be within the next week.
- The casual staff will be invited to team meetings and will be integrated into the substantive team.

The plan for casual staff deployment is not yet complete, but developments to date are positive. Progress in this area will be reviewed at the next full inspection, so the requirement has not been repeated.

3. The registered person was required to ensure that the children living in the home are suitably placed. When problems arise between the children that jeopardise their safety, the registered person must act swiftly to separate the children.

Senior managers did respond to the unsafe mix of children in the home. Since the interim inspection, one young person has been moved to another home. As a result, serious incidents have reduced in frequency and in terms of their level of risk. This element of the notice is met.

The inspector reviewed the current situation for the child and the young person in light of the recent compliance notice.

One young person has unmet mental health needs, and it would be very difficult to match her with other children. However, the young woman is likely to be discharged from the home's care at the end of January 2018. This means that the risk of negative interaction between the two residents is negligible.

The child does now have a consistent team. He also has positive relationships with a number of permanent staff in the home. It may be partly as a result of this that he is now sleeping better. He was also, during the inspection, referring to the home as 'my home'.

However, the child has experienced a lot of changes in the past three months, so his present distressed behaviour is a reflection of this. The changes include:

- The registered manager went on secondment. An interim manager was appointed, but had to take some sickness leave. The interim manager moved on and the registered manager returned to the home.
- There were numerous serious safeguarding incidents, some of which have

involved the child being arrested.

- One of the child's peers moved to another home.
- A new young person was admitted.
- There have been staff changes, with some familiar, experienced and skilled residential workers having to take time off work.
- The child is now having contact with people in the community who are considered to pose a risk to him.
- The child's engagement with his home tutor is variable and he has no consistent educational provision.

The child has outbursts of distressed behaviour. He causes damage to the home. He can also express racist and oppressive views towards certain members of the staff team.

There was an incident during the inspection. This was at least partly triggered by an unexpected situation where there were far too many adults in the home. At one stage, there were 12 adults present, including the inspector. This was because it was a team-meeting day. There was also a drugs and alcohol worker, the child's tutor and a senior manager, as well as the inspector.

The staff team responded appropriately to this incident. Staff tried to defuse the situation without resorting to physical restraint, because they know that this is not helpful to this child. After refusing to engage with his tutor, the child left the home, with the staff's agreement, and went into the city centre.

The incident was serious in terms of the racist language and threats, but could have been a great deal worse in terms of damage and aggressive behaviour. The inspector asked what consequences there were for racist behaviour. The manager explained that the police community beat officer had visited the child to explain that racist language is not only inappropriate but also unlawful. This is an improvement on a previous inspection, where racist behaviour was not responded to appropriately.

This child is also going missing. The staff are working with the police to find the best way to keep him safe when he goes missing.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/10/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
03/05/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
21/12/2016	Full	Good

21/09/2016

Full

Inadequate

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
32: Fitness of workers 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 full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. In particular, ensure that all staff working in the home have complete information on their files in relation to their full employment history. Also, ensure that all staff files contain all other documentary information in line with Schedule 2. Ensure that staff who have lived overseas have a certificate of good conduct from those countries. (Regulation 32 (3) and Schedule 2))	28/02/2018
36: Children's case records The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. In particular, ensure that all children have case records that show when updates have taken place. Also, ensure that risk assessments describe what the child actually does that may be hazardous. (Regulation 36 (1) (a) (b) and (c))	28/02/2018

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC034211

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bristol City Council

Registered provider address: Bristol City Council, Director of Legal Services, City Hall, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TR.

Responsible individual: James Beardall

Registered manager: Patricia Harding

Inspector

Heather Chaplin, social care inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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