

SC034211

Registered provider: Bristol City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

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

The manager was registered with Ofsted in November 2007.

Inspection dates: 27 to 28 June 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account: **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 4 October 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness.

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Compliance notices were issued on 12 October 2017 and 12 December 2017.

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
Fire precautions 25.—(1) After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home. Ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(a) and (d)) In particular, ensure that staff comply with management instructions with regard to completing fire safety checks in a timely manner, in line with the fire and rescue service's recommendations.	31 July 2018

Recommendations

- Ensure that children are in full-time education while 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.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The registered manager and staff have made good progress in all areas since the interim inspection on 4 October 2017, when the home was judged to have declined in effectiveness.

The child, who was not well matched with other children in the home at that time, is now the only resident. Consequently, the frequency of serious incidents in the home has reduced and he is much more settled.

There were many disrupted placements before the child came to this home, which served only to reinforce his feelings of fear and insecurity. It is extremely positive that the child has now remained in this home for longer than any of his previous placements. As a result, the child is now beginning to trust the staff and start to build attachments.

The child is now in good physical health. He receives a wholesome diet and is willing to try a range of home-cooked foods from different cultures. He has recently started to show an interest in working with the staff to grow some of his own fruit and vegetables, which is a major step forward. In addition, staff have helped the young person to settle at night. Sleeping through the night was difficult for him when he first came to live in the home.

The child is beginning to regulate some of his own behaviour. The staff receive clinical supervision from a psychological service to help them to provide the child with appropriate emotional support.

The only area where there has been limited progress is education. The home worked closely with the virtual headteacher and an alternative provision was arranged, but this has since broken down. A recommendation has been made to help keep education as a high priority.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

There have been numerous incidents and significant events since the last inspection. Consequently, it is difficult for the staff to ensure that the child is fully safe.

In spite of these concerns, the child's safety has started to improve:

- The number of incidents in the last two months has halved.
- The child has not been missing from the home since 9 February 2018.
- He keeps in touch with staff when he is out of the home. He is now much more likely to respond to the staff's advice and return when requested.
- The child has been restrained on just one occasion since the last inspection. This

restraint was appropriate and effective.

The staff work hard to help the child to understand the importance of treating everyone with respect and dignity. Staff use restorative justice, and the child is beginning to consider other people.

The registered manager has improved the quality of staff recruitment records, particularly for recently appointed staff. Some historical staff files still have a few unexplained gaps in employment history. Also, the registered manager does not routinely record the outcomes of her conversations to verify references. The previous requirement has been met, but a recommendation has been made.

Fire safety checks and fire drills are sometimes late. Fire drills are held several times a year, but irregularly. Fire alarm tests are a few days late on each occasion. The managers identify this and remind the staff to complete them, but the same happens the following week. In the last 25 weeks, there have been only 15 fire alarm tests. Health and safety must be prioritised, because failure to do so has the potential to place children and staff at risk. A requirement has been made.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home's leaders and managers have helped to drive improvement since the interim inspection in October 2017. At that time, there were insufficient substantive staff in the home. This resulted in high use of agency staff, some of whom did not have sufficient skill to manage the children's complex needs. This made it difficult for the team members to work together to achieve consistent behaviour management. The home was rated 'declined in effectiveness'. Compliance notices were issued under the leadership and management quality standard following that inspection, and also following the monitoring visit on 28 November 2017.

On 24 January 2018, a second monitoring visit found that good progress had been made against the compliance notice. The requirements relating to leadership and management were all met. One major development was that there were sufficient staff in the home without the need to use agency staff.

Two requirements remained in place, with regard to staff recruitment files and children's records. The present inspection has found that these two requirements are now also met.

The atmosphere in the home is completely different to previous inspections. The staff have progressed from responding reactively to incidents, to a much more positive strategy. All the staff spoken with during the inspection could easily identify areas where the child's behaviour and presentation had improved.

Staff and the registered manager work together as a team. They are well supported through training and supervision. Staff are now happy, highly motivated and confident. This is inevitably having a positive effect on the child.

No other children have been placed in the home for several months now. The responsible individual's support for this strategy has been an important factor in the home's good progress. The local authority is currently reviewing its options.

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: SC034211

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Bristol City Council, 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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