

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC037588
Inspector	Nicola Lownds
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Portsmouth City Council
Registered person address	Portsmouth City Council Civic Offices, Guildhall Square PORTSMOUTH PO1 2BG
Responsible individual	Stephen Kitchman
Registered manager	Clive Pfeiffer-Richardson
Date of last inspection	27/11/2014

Inspection date	17/02/2015
Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged adequate at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

The home was last inspected in November 2014 when it was judged as adequate. Some of the requirements and some of the recommendations from the previous inspection have been met. Young people have placement plans and risk assessments on their personal file that have been updated to reflect their current needs. This means staff are equipped to provide the care young people require in order to meet their needs. The Registered Manager ensures that events listed in Schedule 5 are now being notified to Ofsted. An updated copy of the Statement of Purpose could not be provided at this inspection nor has it been sent to HMCI, therefore this requirement is not met. Evidence was provided that shows appraisals have taken place in January 2015 with a schedule plan for the year. During the inspection a Regulation 34 report was provided for period 1 June 2014 – 31 August 2014. There is no report from 1 September 2014 – 30 November 2014 nor has this been sent to HMCI, therefore this requirement is not met. These unmet requirements do not adversely affect young people.

Three of the four recommendations from the last inspection have been met. Reviews conducted by placing social workers now include additional focus on outcomes for young people at the home, they identify how outcomes are achieved and areas the young person is working on. Young people now benefit from the reviews being outcome focused based on their needs. A file audit tool has been placed on young people's records. Supervision records and staff meeting minutes evidence the plan for the monitoring of placement plans. This will equip keyworkers with the skill to review plans more frequently. The Registered Manager plans to conduct a review of the adequacy of recording throughout young people's files and a timetable was provided to evidence this. Young people's wishes and feelings remain overlooked in the monitoring and developing the home. Participation workers have been approached to facilitate workshops to gain young people's views however they lack skills to communicate with disabled young people, which means this

recommendation is not met.

Young people were seen to be happy and relaxed at the home which adapts to meet their needs. The building is large with open plan living and dining areas. Hoists, tracking and specialist bathroom equipment makes all areas of the home accessible to young people. Rooms may be closed off to create a smaller and quieter environment when required. This shows staff can adjust the environment to cater for the diverse needs of young people who visit the home. The garden is accessible by a number of doors, and young people enjoy spending time on the swings and trampoline. This means young people benefit from having an environment that is suitable for them and can provide them with the maximum opportunity to enjoy their short break.

Some parts of the home require attention to ensure it is maintained to a reasonable standard. One bedroom has exposed lighting fixtures with visible surrounding holes into loft spaces that creates a draughty environment in which young people sleep. It is a requirement that this is rectified. In the same room the ceiling is cracked and marked from a recent leak which is also a maintenance issue to be addressed. Another bedroom has glass panels in the door with no way of ensuring privacy; this room is directly opposite the kitchen and dining area. Staff said 'we cannot have a blind as it is specially adapted to be a minimal stimulation room for young people with autism'. However during the inspection the bedroom was being used by a young person who will shortly be turning eighteen. Young people's privacy and dignity is not being respected as staff, young people and visitors have a view into that bedroom at all times.

Some young people's night-time routine includes the use of 'gates' in the home. These are wooden waist-high panels that are bolted to bedroom doors. Staff said 'young people feel safe with them on and if we didn't use them they would run about all over the home, some young people request them'. The rationale for the use of these restrictions is not clearly identified in young people's care plans. A social worker said 'I was not aware gates are used for him, you have surprised me.' The parent of the same young person was also unaware of this practice. This means restrictions are put in place without the consent or knowledge of the parent or placing social worker. In addition clear records are not held relating to the reasons for the use of a specialist high-sided bed for one young person. Therefore proper consideration is not taking place in relation to young people's welfare and the use of restrictions and this needs reviewing.

It is evident through observation that staff clearly know the young people they care for well. Staff communicate using speech, objects of reference and Makaton, dependant on preference of the young person. Young people respond positively to these methods and are able to communicate their needs to the staff member who is looking after them. Good communication methods such as these ensure that young people can communicate their wishes and contributes to them feeling safe in the home.

Parents and carers speak highly of the home and how it operates. Families were seen to be welcomed into the home and undoubtedly felt at ease that staff would meet the needs of their child during their stay. A grandparent said, 'this place has been a lifeline for my family, he is so happy here, it's such a fantastic place what they do is great and I have nothing bad to say about it only good things'.

Staff receive appraisals and there is a clear schedule in place to ensure this consistently happens. Specialist training is available to staff such as safeguarding disabled children, physical intervention and moving and handling. These are all conducted in the home as a whole team. This shows staff have the opportunity to develop well and in particular have their skills developed that match the needs of the young people who visit the home.

The Registered Manager and Responsible Individual were unavailable during the inspection. Regulation 34 reports are not systematically completed by the Registered Manager. This means quality monitoring is not taking place under Schedule 6 and the recognition of trends and developments needed for the home is not systematic. There is a plan for a new system and Regulation 34 template to be introduced imminently by the senior management team. The home does not have a revised Statement of Purpose available to include a procedure for children going missing as required at the previous inspection. The Registered Manager is therefore not overseeing the home as required by the regulations. Whilst the quality of care young people receive is usually of a good standard the leadership and management processes require review. This means young people are not benefiting from a well-managed home that can develop to ensure their safety and well-being.

Information about this children's home

This home is registered for a maximum of six young people between the ages of five and under 18 years. It is owned by a city council and provides short-term placements for young people with learning difficulties and physical disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/11/2014	Full	adequate
24/01/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
17/09/2013	Full	good
12/02/2013	Interim	good progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
4 (2001)	ensure that the statement of purpose includes all matters listed in Schedule 1 including the procedure if children go missing, and that a copy of the statement of purpose is sent to HMCI (Regulation 4 (1) (2))	17/03/2015
11 (2001)	ensure young people's privacy and dignity is respected at all times, this specifically relates to the bedroom with glass panels in the door (Regulation 11 (2) (a))	17/03/2015
11 (2001)	ensure the home is conducted to make proper provision for safeguarding and welfare of children, specifically that a review is conducted on the use of restrictive interventions such as the use of bolted wooden gates to confine a young person to their bedroom (Regulation 11 (1) (a) (b))	17/03/2015

31 (2001)	ensure that the home is kept in good structural repair internally, specifically in bedrooms with exposed light fittings and visible holes into the loft space (Regulation 31 (2) (d) (e))	17/03/2015
34 (2001)	ensure that the matters set out in Schedule 6 are monitored at least once in every three months in order to improve the quality of care in the children's home, and the report is sent to HMCI. (Regulation 34 (1) (a) (b) (2) (3))	17/03/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the views, wishes and feelings of children and those significant to them are taken into account in monitoring staff and in developing the home (NMS 1.7)
- ensure records are clear, up to date and contribute to an understanding of the child's life; specifically recording the reason for the use of specialist beds and that parents and placing social workers are consenting to the use of restrictive equipment. (NMS 22.5)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.