

SC037762

Registered provider: Portsmouth City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The local authority operates this home. The home has reduced the number of children that it is registered for by Ofsted. The home is now registered to care for up to five children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The aim of the home is to provide stable and consistent care to children, some of whom may be placed in an emergency, such as being an unaccompanied minor.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since July 2011.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 January 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 19 October 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Ofsted issued a restriction of accommodation notice for the period 25 October 2017 to 25 January 2018. A monitoring visit took place on 28 November 2017 and the home was compliant with the restriction of accommodation notice.

Ofsted issued one compliance notice on 14 November 2017 for Regulation 14, the care planning standard, and one compliance notice on 15 November 2017 for Regulation 12, the protection of children standard. The date required for meeting the steps outlined in both compliance notices was 10 January 2018.

A monitoring visit took place on 15 January 2018 and both compliance notices were found to be met.

The restriction of accommodation notice expired on 25 January 2018 and was not renewed by Ofsted.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/10/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
08/05/2017	Full	Good
16/03/2017	Full	Inadequate
06/06/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 registered person must ensure that any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises is necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 21 (c)(ii))	31/03/2019
The registered person must ensure that medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child. (Regulation 23 (2)(b))	31/03/2019
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b))	31/03/2019

Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', paragraph 9.5, page 42)
In particular, this refers to reviewing ignition sources in rooms.
- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents, such as learning from disruptions and placement breakdowns. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', paragraph 10.24, page 55)
- Under regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', paragraph 15.1,

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people show great empathy and support for others in the home. They can contextualise their own life journey and view things from a different perspective. They help others in the home, for example by showing them how to use a games console. Young people say that they feel happy, safe and well cared for. A placing social worker commented on how well a young person's bedroom is personalised and that it is comfortable.

Staff see behind the immediate presenting behaviours of young people. They demonstrate an understanding of the underlying psychological reasons for behaviour, adjusting their approach to try to meet that need. This means that they do not use punitive strategies. They do not unnecessarily involve the police and criminalise young people when young people are expressing difficult and painful emotions.

The changes in the staffing structure of the home are effective, positive and welcomed by all, resulting in a team around the child approach. Staff keep the ongoing and emerging needs of each young person at the centre of their practice.

Staff have a procedure in place for the management of medication. In one case, they did not manage a prescribed medication very well. There were no arrangements for administration when a young person was visiting friends and no health advice taken when the young person refused medication and did not complete the course of antibiotics.

Staff are effective at working with other professionals. For example, they work with education staff to improve attendance at school and discuss any issues so that there is a consistent approach. Staff work with a clinical psychologist who visits the home weekly, so young people engage with therapy, thereby improving their emotional well-being.

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

The structural changes in the leadership and management and improvements in the monitoring of the service and the streamlining and smart recording processes have brought about significant improvement, especially ensuring that staff safeguard each young person effectively. Staff work with the placing social worker, police and other professionals to agree and implement strategies to manage high-risk behaviours. They engage with the designated officer for safeguarding in the local authority to agree any actions if an allegation is made about a member of staff.

Staff consider the impact of each young person's behaviour on others living in the home and will not tolerate poor behaviour, such as bullying. In one case, the registered

manager ended a placement after exhaustive efforts were not successful in modifying a young person's behaviour.

Staff have significantly improved their response when children go missing from care. Staff follow statutory guidance, following and contacting young people during a missing episode and making a referral to police when appropriate. Staff give young people a clear message that they care for them and are concerned about their welfare. Young people respond to this and learn to trust staff, for example by giving them the names and addresses of their friends. Staff make arrangements so that young people can spend time with others who are important to them. This includes overnight sleepovers as agreed with relevant professionals.

Staff review risk assessments after significant incidents to keep young people as safe as possible. Strategies are successful and behaviours, such as going missing or causing damage to the home, are reducing. The inspector noted that staff call the police far less frequently to the home to help manage behaviour. However, staff do not always notify Ofsted when police involvement has been necessary.

Staff recognise the risk of fire and have suitable control measures in place. They identify young people who may be fire-setters and engage the expertise of other professionals to address this. The risk assessment for young people with ignition sources in their bedrooms would benefit from a review.

The 'staying close' agenda is an initiative embraced by the local authority, with building plans in full swing. The location risk assessment has not yet been reviewed to consider the change in the use of the neighbouring building.

Placing social workers are extremely positive about the quality of care, communication and progress of the young person that they have placed in the home. One example is a young person now able to tolerate a communal living environment from a starting point of needing a sole placement.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There has been a quantum leap in the change of culture in this home, with young people now firmly at the centre of practice. Staff work in 'pods' led by a senior childcare officer. They regularly discuss their allocated young person and the effectiveness of their interventions. The supervision structure has been strengthened with 'pod' supervisions and group supervision of seniors, in addition to individual supervision.

The registered manager has been ambitious in his desire to bring about the necessary improvements. The local authority has ensured that there has been significant investment to improve the fabric of the building, resulting in a warm, comfortable, homely feel to the environment. Some practices are still embedded that have an impact on young people's privacy and access to all parts of the home. For example, staff do not issue young people with keys to their bedroom doors, and they use door sensors and

undertake room searches, regardless of the level of risk. The use of unsightly external window restrictors is disproportionate and detracts from the homely environment.

The registered manager has brought about significant improvements in placement planning, matching and review, optimising the chance of placement success. He ensures that there are clear care pathways for each young person, including those admitted for a short period. He ensures that the home is operating in accordance with the statement of purpose. Senior leaders in the local authority support the registered manager in the decision-making process regarding proposed placements.

The registered manager has introduced a behaviour management tracking tool to keep oversight of all the young people's presenting behaviours, both positive and negative. He ensures that staff reflect on behaviours and they make any necessary changes to placement plans on a regular basis, against the quality standards.

The local authority has introduced a non-violent incident reporting system that allows the management team to review and reflect on incidents. Its members assess the effectiveness of the approach of staff. The management team does not always assess the quality of the narrative of events or have clear learning outcomes. Its members miss the opportunity to improve practice.

The independent visitor assesses the quality of care monthly, picking up on the pertinent issues and providing a report to Ofsted. The registered manager responds promptly to any matters that have been identified.

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: SC037762

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Portsmouth City Council

Registered provider address: Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth PO1 2BG

Responsible individual: Gail Hancock

Registered manager: Calvin George

Inspector

Keith Riley, social care inspector

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