

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 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: 11 to 12 March 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 3 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/01/2019	Full	Good
19/10/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
06/06/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/03/2016	Full	Requires improvement

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

The children living at this home have been making very little progress in their education, health or social development since arriving at the home. The strategies for encouraging them to participate effectively in their education, or other meaningful activities, are ineffective. None of the requirements or recommendations made at the previous full inspection have been met.

The staff team's inability to positively engage with the children has resulted in a lack of routines, ineffective boundaries and punitive practice. The lack of aspiration from staff members for the children and continuing routines which encourage children to isolate themselves mean that children's experiences and progress are negatively affected.

Inspectors found the doors locked to the downstairs rooms. These locked rooms were cold, unwelcoming and unused. The registered manager has failed to consider the impact of such measures on the children. One child told inspectors that children spend most of their time in their bedrooms and that children rarely mix but have all they need for comfort, entertainment and snacks in their rooms. The registered manager has failed to identify the negative consequence of such restrictive measures, which is not in line with the home's statement of purpose.

One child has a serious health condition. The strategies to encourage him to participate in managing this are ineffective. In addition to this, the staff's recording of medication is poor. Not all missed medication is recorded. Additionally, medication has gone missing. Eighteen tablets went missing between 24 January 2020 and 19 February 2020. Staff had not taken responsibility for medication during this time, and the registered manager's response was poor. To date, the tablets remain unaccounted for.

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

The safeguarding culture at this home is ineffective. Concerns raised by the children have not been effectively investigated. For example, a child and staff member raised concerns about one staff member smelling of alcohol when working at the home. The registered manager failed to take effective action. No consultation took place with the designated officer regarding these concerns. Furthermore, the staff member returned to work with no effective measures in place to monitor the impact on their working practice.

One child has been a victim of child sexual exploitation while living at the home. The staff failed to identify the child to be at risk of further child sexual exploitation. No updates had been made to the child's specific risk assessment despite these known risks and vulnerabilities. As a result, the staff do not have clear guidance or strategies to follow to reduce the risk to the child. The registered manager, despite

being asked by inspectors, did not identify this child as being a child who is at risk of sexual exploitation. These significant failures to recognise risk, and ensure that there are strategies to manage it, mean that children are not safe.

The children continue to engage in risky behaviour. One child's bedroom had a strong odour of cannabis and drug paraphernalia scattered around. The staff, including the registered manager, failed to understand their own policy, initially stating that the child had to be present to conduct the room check. After several prompts by the inspectors, they were informed that a room search did take place, but they were not informed of the outcome, despite asking.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The registered manager is ineffective in addressing the lack of the children's progress and poor staff performance. The registered manager and staff are long-serving and experienced and have worked at the home for many years. They have failed to keep their practice up to date and they work in an insular and unsafe way.

The registered manager has implemented punitive measures which control the electrical power to the children's bedrooms. When a child does not engage in education, the power sockets in their bedroom are switched off between midnight and two thirty in the afternoon. The children described 'working around this'. One child sleeps during the time the power is switched off. Children charge their mobile devices when the power is switched on and use these devices when the power is switched off. Furthermore, their smart phones are unrestricted and not monitored by the staff. The registered manager's measures are wholly ineffective in addition to being wholly inappropriate. The children continue to have inconsistent education attendance, despite this measure. It is unclear how such measures are reviewed, and the staff do not keep records of when they are used. These measures are not reasonable and are not effective. Furthermore, it is of concern that senior managers have not reviewed these measures or reviewed practice in the home.

The registered manager has failed to ensure that the staff are delivering care in line with the home's statement of purpose. Inspectors sampled children's key work sessions. These sessions did not demonstrate a restorative approach as promoted in the statement of purpose.

Staff supervision records lack a clear structure, detailed analysis of staff's practice, and critical reflection. As a result, the staff's practice is not effectively monitored or developed.

Some records were not made available during the inspection. Inspectors were told that some were archived, and others were incomplete, of poor quality and lacked chronological structure and detail. Consequently, there may be gaps in critical records that are intrinsic to the child's journey through the home.

The registered manager is not making effective use of the actions raised by the independent person. He has sought to minimise her concerns about the running of

the home, including the lack of routines and boundaries and the behaviour of the children that has been left unaddressed during her visits.

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding; understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iv))	26/04/2020
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those	26/04/2020

expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; strive to gain each child's respect and trust; understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children; and that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(i)(ii)(iv)(v)(ix)(viii)(x)(xi)(b))	
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iv)(v)(vi)(b))	26/04/2020
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.	26/04/2020

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— - lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; - ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; - ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; - ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; - ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; - understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g))	
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ('the statement of purpose') which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (1)(5))	26/04/2020
No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child. The following measures may not be used to discipline any child— any measure involving punishing a group of children for the behaviour of an individual child. (Regulation 19 (1)(2)(j))	26/04/2020
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))	26/04/2020
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))	26/04/2020
The registered manager must undertake such continuing professional development as is necessary to ensure that the registered manager has the skills needed for managing the home. (Regulation 29 (4))	26/04/2020
The registered person must operate a disciplinary procedure which, in particular—	26/04/2020

provides for the suspension from work of an employee if necessary in the interests of the safety or welfare of children; and provides that the failure on the part of an employee to report an incident of abuse, or suspected abuse, whether past or present, in relation to a child to the appropriate person is a ground on which disciplinary proceedings may be instituted. The registered person must ensure that all employees— - undertake appropriate continuing professional development; - receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and - have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (2)(a)(b)(4)(c)(b)(c))	
The registered person must ensure that the following items, which may be kept in electronic form, are kept in an accessible manner— - children's case records (see regulation 36); - other records (see regulation 37). (Regulations 38 (i)(j))	26/04/2020
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))	26/04/2020

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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 address: Portsmouth City Council, Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth PO1 2EA

Responsible individual: Sarah Daly

Registered manager: Calvin George

Inspectors

Sarah Olliver, Social Care Inspector
Kelly Marchmont, Social Care Inspector

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