

# SC037762

**Portsmouth City Council**

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this children's home**

The local authority operates this home. The home is registered to care for up to seven children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The aim of the home is to provide stable and consistent care to young people who are often placed in an emergency.

**Inspection date:** 15 January 2018

## **This monitoring visit**

This children's home was judged declined in effectiveness at the interim inspection on 19 October 2017. Ofsted issued a restriction of accommodation notice for the period 25 October 2017 to 25 January 2018.

Ofsted issued one compliance notice on 14 November 2017 and one compliance notice on 15 November 2017. The date required for meeting the steps outlined in both compliance notices was 10 January 2018.

A monitoring visit took place on 28 November 2017 to assess the home's compliance with the notice of restriction of accommodation only. The home was compliant with the restriction of accommodation notice.

The purpose of this visit was to assess if the home had met in full the steps set out in the requirements of the compliance notices of 14 and 15 November 2017 and if the restriction of accommodation, which expires on 25 January 2018, would need to be reissued.

Senior leaders within the local authority have taken the concerns raised by Ofsted extremely seriously. They met with Ofsted on 19 December 2017. At this meeting, the leaders within the local authority clearly outlined their intent to review the residential provision across the county, including this home. They were clear in their plans for this provision, which will include a revision of the statement of purpose and an application to vary the conditions of registration. A draft statement of purpose has been submitted to Ofsted. Senior leaders have also commissioned other professionals to give guidance, advice and support. They are reviewing other

services as a benchmark for the direction that they believe the provision needs to go.

No children have moved into the home since the last monitoring visit. As such, the home continues to comply with the restriction of accommodation notice.

**The compliance notice of 14 November 2017 set out four steps that were required to be completed to meet Regulation 14, the care planning standard.**

With the caveat that the statement of purpose is under review and that no young people have moved in, the admissions process has been improved but is not yet tested. The system in place will utilise a matching tool, used prior to accepting a child, to assess the impact on the other children in the home. There are systems in place to request the relevant information to inform the placement plan. Key staff have triggers to ensure that important information, such as health plans and personal education plans, are in place. Evidence was seen at this monitoring visit of staff requesting an up-to-date personal education plan. Key staff will ensure that action points are followed up by the relevant professionals.

A placement plan, seen at this monitoring visit, showed significant improvement. It was succinct and, together with the improved risk assessment, clearly informs staff of the needs of the child and how staff are to meet these needs. The registered manager is working with another professional to streamline further the documentation in the home. The children's guide has been reviewed and now clarifies expectations of children living in the home. Staff have used this as a tool to reset expectations for the children currently living in the home.

The strategies to reduce criminal offending have been identified. Sufficient progress has been made to implement these strategies in practice, as can reasonably be expected in the timeframe within the compliance notice. Other agencies, such as the youth offending team and fire service, are now supporting the process. Although the process is still in the early stages, children's initial engagement is positive. The management team acknowledges the need to include discussion about criminal offending in key-work sessions and to document this in the record. A serious incident report format has been developed to record significant events that do not involve physical restraint. There are clear plans to collate, review and analyse such incidents to inform future care planning and reflect on practice. Likewise, the violent incident forms now have an addendum that outlines the possible underlying antecedents. These will also be used as tools to drive forward improvement and reduce such incidents. There are improvements to the structured timetable, sanctions and rewards. These are yet to be embedded in practice. It is also noted that staff have been persistent in promoting education, even for children who appear to be totally disengaged and negative in their attitude to their learning.

The steps required to meet the compliance notice under regulation 14 are met.

**The compliance notice of 15 November 2017 set out six steps that were**

**required to be completed to meet Regulation 12, the protection of children standard.**

The risk assessment process has been reviewed. A missing child toolkit from the local safeguarding children's board is being used to inform risk assessments for children missing from care. Such assessments are significantly improved, as is the management monitoring of events. Specific risks and control measures are outlined in the risk assessment documentation. These inform staff as to the necessary action to take. Records demonstrate that staff apply this in practice. Further training and discussion on practice is planned with staff in February 2018. The registered manager has designed a spreadsheet to collate data and to use this as a tool to analyse trends.

Although one child is demonstrating increased incidents in going missing, staff are more effective in following procedures to keep the child as safe as possible and effect a safe return. Staff are working with other professionals to review the care plan and placement. This includes the police and consideration as to how unhealthy relationships can be disrupted. Senior leaders are considering the arrangements should a child go missing at night. They are keeping an oversight of escalating risk-taking behaviour and ensuring that the multi-agency strategy meetings are convened if necessary. There are clear contingency plans if the placement is not deemed able to meet the child's needs.

The registered manager has worked with other professionals to assess the suitability of individuals in the local community that children associate with. He has challenged other professionals regarding omitted information and, in one case, reconvened a meeting to assess further the risks. It was evident at the monitoring visit that staff are alert to the risks in the community and inform the registered manager of the same, who gives clear guidance as to the next steps to keep children as safe as possible in the community.

There have been significant improvements in documentation, especially incident reporting as described above. There is more emphasis on an audit trail rather than a dependence on emails. Effort has been made to collate information to provide an overview of a child's behaviour and needs. This provides the opportunity for staff to adjust their response, if necessary, to a child's changing needs and risks.

The management team has clear plans to provide further training and guidance to staff on key working. The management team recognises the need to document significant conversations that may not take place in formal key-work sessions. The management has a system in place for key workers to pass on any information that is of concern so that appropriate action can be taken. The training and improvement of documentation bodes well for future practice.

The steps required to meet the compliance notice under regulation 12 are met.

## Summary

Realistic progress has been made. Changes to practice, documentation and culture, which are likely to become embedded over time, will be assessed through routine inspection practice. Senior leaders within the local authority have made a commitment to review the home's statement of purpose in line with their review of the residential provision across the county.

- **The two compliance notices are met and have now expired.**
- **The restriction of accommodation notice that expires on 25 January 2018 will not be re-issued.**

## 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                |
| 06/06/2016      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness   |

## **Information about this inspection**

The purpose of this unannounced visit was to monitor compliance with the notice of restriction of accommodation during the first six weeks of the notice.

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

## **Children's home details**

**Unique reference number:** SC037762

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Portsmouth City Council

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

**Responsible individual:** Sarah Newman

**Registered manager:** Calvin George

## **Inspectors:**

Keith Riley, social care inspector  
Sophie Wood, regulatory inspection manager

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