

SC037762

Registered provider: Portsmouth City Council

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a local authority and is registered to provide care for up to five children who experience social and emotional difficulties. There were four children living in the home at the time of the inspection.

There is currently no registered manager. Leaders have appointed a manager, who will apply to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 23 October 2023

Date of last inspection: 10 May 2023

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Outcome from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Findings from the inspection

There is a reliance on temporary staff and on the interim manager to fill rota gaps. As a result, children are not benefiting from being looked after by a stable staff team. Monitoring and oversight of the home have been poor during a challenging period. Despite these shortfalls, children said that they enjoy living at the home.

The inspector observed some warm interactions between children and staff. However, the lack of a consistent staff team has caused some children to feel unsettled. This has led to an increase in incidents, including self-harming behaviour.

When serious incidents occur, managers usually take swift and decisive action to ensure children's safety and well-being. They involve external safeguarding agencies as necessary. Managers notify Ofsted as required, which enables the regulator to ensure that there has been a robust response.

On one occasion, there was a delay in the management team's response to a child making an allegation against staff. Additionally, the inspector found that one child's risk assessment included details of actions to take to keep the child safe, but these were not being consistently followed. Managers took immediate action to address this shortfall.

Steps are being taken to embed improved record-keeping processes. In the meantime, some records are missing, and some are being stored in multiple places. This affects the staff team's ability to access all the information held about the children.

There is a shortfall in the monitoring of staff training. The system for recording staff training attendance does not currently demonstrate that staff have received training that is relevant to all the needs of the children that they are looking after.

The interim manager is being supported by senior leaders who are clear about their expectations of staff. As a result, there is a firm basis for improvement in the quality of care to be made.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/05/2023	Full	Good
19/05/2022	Full	Good
27/04/2021	Full	Good
11/03/2020	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, The 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 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— have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, ensure that all staff understand and follow all children's risk management plans.	31 January 2024
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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—	31 January 2024

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))	
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— an understanding about acceptable behaviour. 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; communicate to each child expectations about the child’s behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child’s age and understanding. (Regulation 11 (1)(b) (2)(a)(i)(v))	31 January 2024

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 2EA

Responsible individual: Sam Bushby

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Jill Sephton-Wright, Social Care Inspector

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