

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	01/09/2015
Unique reference number	SC037910
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Hampshire County Council
Registered person address	Hampshire County Council, The Castle, WINCHESTER, Hampshire, SO23 8ZB

Responsible individual	Mrs Susan Lomax
Registered manager	Ms Tamara Pearcey
Inspector	Mrs McMillan

Inspection date	01/09/2015
Previous inspection judgement	sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC037910

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The home provides continuity and stability enabling young people to develop their resilience, coping strategies and skills in preparation for adult life.
- Young people live in a nurturing and supportive home environment.
- Young people have positive and meaningful relationships with staff who they trust.
- Young people are developing an understanding of their behaviours and as a result are beginning to manage their emotions more constructively and talk about their feelings.
- Young people's views are central to the running of the home.
- Staff listen attentively to young people and as a result are excellent advocates for them.
- Staff and managers take their responsibility to safeguard young people extremely seriously.
- The manager leads a committed team of staff who have an excellent knowledge of the young people they support and they know what is best for them.
- The manager is an excellent advocate for the young people and will challenge partner agencies when she does not believe that they providing the high quality support young people are entitled to.

What does the children's home need to improve?

- Staff need to ensure they act in accordance with the home's missing person's policy.
- Staff need to continually review their strategies to reduce young people's missing events and risk taking behaviour to ensure they remain effective.
- The location review needs to include the risks presented by local amenities and how these can be minimised. It should draw a conclusion as to the suitability of the homes location.
- The manager should keep a record of supervision.

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

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 (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person is required to ensure that staff: (vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (2) (a) (vii))	03/11/2015

Recommendations

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

- The service should demonstrate how staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them to ensure they remain effective. This is in regards to young people's risk taking and missing behaviour. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards, page 42, paragraph 9.5).
- A record of supervision should be kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b). (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards, page 61, paragraph 13.3).
- 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. This includes the risks presented by local amenities. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards, page 64, paragraph 15.1).

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a local authority. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for no more than four young people who have complex behavioural and emotional needs.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/03/2015	CH - Interim	sustained effectiveness
04/11/2014	CH - Full	Outstanding
06/11/2013	CH - Interim	Good Progress
09/04/2013	CH - Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
The home provides continuity and stability enabling young people to develop their resilience, coping strategies and skills in preparation for adult life. Managers and staff challenge the appropriate authorities to ensure young people move on in a planned transition. Staff support young people have their say and are able to contribute to any plans. Staff assist young people in developing their skills, teaching them to cook, carry out chores and manage their finances. Staff use the 'pillars of parenting model' to reflect on young people's development and readiness for more responsibility. This enables them to identify areas to support young people to work on. As a result young people are maturing and increasing in confidence. When young people leave the service they are supported by staff to ensure their next home is appropriate and suitable. Staff assist young people to visit their future accommodation and share information with new staff to promote a successful transition. Young people live in a nurturing and supportive home environment, which provides them with structure and routine. Young people have positive and meaningful	

relationships with staff who they trust. Staff know the young people very well and have an excellent knowledge of their past histories, needs and personalities. The individualised support provided by staff has improved young people's levels of self-esteem and self-worth and enabled them to move forward in their lives.

The care provided by staff is enabling young people to make positive progress in many aspects of their lives. In particular, young people are developing an understanding of their behaviours and as a result are beginning to manage their emotions more constructively and talk about their feelings. The majority of young people are making good progress in their education and as result will be attending college next year. However, on some occasion's young people have been excluded from school, have refused to attend or refused to complete their exams, despite staff encouragement and guidance. One young person did not receive their full educational entitlement whilst living at the home, staff challenged the relevant authorities on the young person's behalf. However the young person regularly did not engage in the small amount of education provided. This means that they did not benefit fully from the opportunities made available to them.

Young people are taking more responsibility for their own health needs, including making health appointments and making informed choices. However some young people have missed health appointments despite staff's encouragement. Staff provide guidance and education in relations to smoking, however this has not yet been successful in reducing smoking by a young person.

Young people's views are central to the running of the home. They are regularly asked for their opinion. Young people feel able to raise their concerns and make a complaint when necessary. Young people are confident that staff will act on their concerns and try to resolve them. Staff listen attentively to young people and as a result are excellent advocates for them. Staff have supported young people to express their wishes regarding contact with their family. Where young people have wanted to maintain links with their family, staff have assisted this enabling young people to achieve a sense of belonging.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Staff and managers take their responsibility to safeguard young people extremely seriously. They monitor young people closely and react promptly and appropriately to refer any safeguarding concerns to the local authorities designated officer. The	

manager ensures that measures taken to address young people's risk taking behaviour are discussed and agreed with families, placing social workers, and the police. As a result young people say they feel safe and cared for.

There have been a high number of missing incidents since the previous inspection. Staff liaise closely with the local missing person's liaison officer, local authority designated officer and placing social workers to devise strategies to reduce missing episodes. This has been successful for some young people however for a minority these strategies were not effective and they continued to leave the home without permission. The home has clear protocols to follow in the event that a young person is missing from the home. Staff respond immediately and inform the appropriate professionals. On return to the home the young people are offered 'independent' interviews from their placing social worker. This ensures that the young people can speak to an external person if the reasons for running away are related to anything happening in the home.

However, on some occasions staff have not been proactive in searching for young people who are absent from the home which may have caused a delay in the young person being found. On other occasions staff have not provided a means of safe return for young people once they have been found. This could leave young people at further risk of harm or put a strain on the home's relationship with the local police who are often having to return young people to the home.

Young people's risk assessments are detailed and comprehensive. They advise of young people's past histories, associated risks and the strategies staff should employ to minimise them. However these strategies have not been successful in addressing the risk taking behaviour of a minority of young people who continued to leave the home without permission and engage in criminal and antisocial behaviour.

Staff have an excellent understanding of young people and recognise that their behaviour is communication and respond to it as such. Staff devise different strategies to support young people to understand their behaviours and manage their feelings more constructively. Although all staff are trained in an approved behaviour management technique staff focus on deescalating behaviours and using restorative approaches. These approaches have been successful as there has been minimal use of physical intervention since the previous inspection. Staff do not impose a great deal of sanctions and those that are imposed are fair and proportionate.

Young people live in a homely and comfortable environment. They are able to individualise their bedrooms to reflect their personalities giving them a sense of identity and belonging at the home. Managers carry out regular health and safety checks to identify any potential hazards and reduce risk. The home's location review considers the majority of risks presented by the local area, however it lacks

details on some amenities and the risks these may present. It also does not evaluate and form a conclusion on the suitability of the location and premises to ensure it remains appropriate for a children's home.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The registered manager has a wealth of experience and holds numerous qualifications in leadership and management and in social care. She has been registered with Ofsted since 2008. The manager was not present at the inspection however the strong systems she has put in place means the home continues to run smoothly in her absence. The manager leads a committed team of staff who have an excellent knowledge of the young people they support and they know what is best for them. She has developed excellent links with the placing authorities, police and education to ensure each young person has a network of support. The manager is responsive and is quick to ensure a multi-agency response to any concerns regarding young people's safety. The manager is an excellent advocate for the young people and will challenge agencies when she does not believe that they providing the high quality support young people are entitled to. This includes young people's educational establishments and the virtual head to ensure young people receive their full entitlement to education. On other occasions the manager has liaised with young people's schools to offer support and guidance in managing young people's behaviour. The manager has also used her links with the police to provide education to young people to deter them from engaging in missing and anti-social behaviour. The managers monitoring is thorough and the reports produced are comprehensive. She is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of service. However it is not clear how this information is used to improve the effectiveness of strategies to support young people. This includes young people who regularly go missing. The home's policies are regularly reviewed, however staff are not always following some of the home's procedures. This includes when young people are missing. The home's policy states that staff should 'visit locations that the child is known to frequent' and 'if the whereabouts are known or suspected it is the responsibility of the carer to arrange for the child's return'. There have been several instances when these procedures have not been followed.	

External monitoring visits take place monthly by the independent visitor and this provides further scrutiny of the care provided. However the independent visitor has not made any recommendations since the previous inspection, this does not challenge and aid the manager to continually improve the standard of care provided.

The staff team is motivated and committed to providing good quality care and support to young people to help them progress. Staff describe the manager as supportive and driven. Staff development is a priority and the manager has used supervision and the appraisal system effectively to identify goals and develop her staff team. As a result, a number of staff have obtained qualifications in their chosen areas. This ensures that the staff have the skills to care for the young people and that their knowledge and understanding is current. Staff report having regular supervision which provides them with an opportunity to review their own development needs; the running of the home and how best to develop and improve the standard of care and support provided. However records of supervision taking place were not readily available.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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