

SC037910

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and run by a local authority and provides care for up to two children who experience social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home.

There has been no registered manager since July 2025.

An acting manager has been in post since October 2025 and is not yet registered. The manager was not present for the inspection

Inspection date: 17 March 2026

Date of last inspection: 24 June 2025

Judgement at last inspection: Requires improvement to be 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'.

Findings 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.

There were shortfalls found in relation to the leadership and management arrangements and one incident in relation to monitoring childrens online activity. As a result, new requirements and recommendations have been made following this inspection. Since the full inspection in June 2025, managers have met five of the seven requirements raised. Not all the recommendations were reviewed at this inspection and have been restated.

Children have trusting relationships with staff, even those who have only lived in the home a short time. They have fun with staff and do activities they enjoy together, such as going to the beach and cinema. Staff help children to improve their independence in age-appropriate ways, such as cleaning, cooking and shopping. One child said that the best thing about living in the home is 'the staff who work here'.

Staff help children to meet their health needs. One child said they were no longer concerned about their eating habits because of the help provided by staff making them feel more comfortable eating in the home. Staff help children to overcome barriers to accessing important healthcare appointments. Staff arranged for one medical professional to visit a child at the home, instead of in the community. This meant that they were able to have their needs assessed and treated effectively.

Staff know what to do when children are missing from home. They follow children when they leave the home and encourage them to return safely. When children cannot be located, they work well with other agencies such as the police to find the children quickly. Staff talk to children about their motivations and help them to learn about the risks they may experience when away from the home. As a result, the children are missing from home less often. For example, one child who was previously missing from home on a regular basis has not done so for over six months.

Managers have made improvements to the systems used to monitor childrens online activity. One child uses a mobile phone which uses specialist software to allow managers better oversight of potential danger to the child, whilst encouraging their independence. For another child, a previous multi-agency assessment considered the risks associated with applying restrictions to their devices, and information gathered through this approach has contributed to safeguarding arrangements. However, there has not been a review of these arrangements, or an agreed plan to manage the risk, despite a concern being raised about the child's use of an adult website.

Leadership arrangements are not yet effective at ensuring that staff receive the support and guidance that they need to deliver consistent care for children. Some

staff reported that communication from managers about how best to manage children's risks is inconsistent or conflicting. Staff also said that they do not always receive updates when managers have made agreements with children or professionals at meetings. This has meant that there have been occasions when staff have not followed a because they were not clear on what is required of them.

The plans in place to help staff to manage children's risks are not always up to date with current information and do not always provide clear guidance for staff about how to respond to specific situations. For example, one child's plans do not make it clear when staff should intervene when they may be harming themselves. As a result, the response from staff has been inconsistent.

There has been considerable change in the management structure since the last inspection. However, leaders have not ensured that the home's Statement of Purpose has been updated to reflect these changes and submitted this document to Ofsted.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/06/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/11/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/04/2023	Full	Good
21/11/2022	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— 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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(v)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's plans are updated and that information is promptly shared when new concerns arise that may impact on the response of staff to safeguard children. Plans should clearly describe the actions that staff should take to keep children safe from identified risks. The registered person must ensure that there are adequate systems in place to allow staff to monitor children's activity online in ways that are suitable for their individual needs for the purposes of safeguarding and take prompt action to review measures when concerns are identified. This requirement is restated.	30 April 2026
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— ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(e)(h))	30 April 2026

In particular, the registered person must ensure that they have effective oversight of incidents taking place within the home to ensure that they know what leads up to incidents taking place, and how staff are responding to these so that learning is shared and reflective practice can take place. The registered person must ensure that there are effective communication systems in place to ensure that information relating to changes to childrens care and the wider operation of the home is accessible to staff so that they are able to provide consistent care to children. This requirement is restated.	
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 The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b))	30 April 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when children make suggestions to improve the quality of care and their experiences in the home, that their engagement in the fulfilment of those suggestions is not a barrier to their views being acted upon by staff and leaders. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon.
(‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 22 paragraph 4.11)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC037910

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Registered provider address: The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UG

Responsible individual: Deborah Price

Registered manager: Post Vacant

Inspector

Glen Strowbridge, Social Care Inspector

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