

# SC037910

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local authority. It provides care for up to three children. Its aim is to help children to recover from experiences which have caused them to be vulnerable and disrupted their primary relationships.

The registered manager position has been vacant since June 2021.

### Inspection dates: 21 and 22 November 2022

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account** **inadequate**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and/or the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

**Date of last inspection:** 30 August 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** inadequate

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** Ofsted issued a notice restricting accommodation, which means that no further children could move into the home. Two compliance notices have also been served and monitored during this time.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 30/08/2022      | Full            | Inadequate                      |
| 31/03/2022      | Interim         | Improved effectiveness          |
| 06/07/2021      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 15/05/2018      | Full            | Outstanding                     |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate**

Significant and widespread failures in how well children are helped and protected and how the home is led and managed have left children at risk.

Staff have failed to address safeguarding concerns regarding substance misuse and potential child exploitation. Measures are not in place to guide staff in how to respond to these challenges.

Staff are supporting children to make progress, but shortfalls remain, and for one child, expected progress has not been achieved. Staff are supportive and they encourage children's participation in education. One child's attendance has increased, and they now speak positively about school.

During the inspection, the window in one child's bedroom was found to be boarded up. This was letting in damp, and it was not deemed to be safe for a child to remain sleeping in this room. The inspector identified that the window had been boarded up some weeks before. Although it had been reported at the time of incident, there had been no subsequent follow-up to repair the broken window. The child was moved to another bedroom and the window was replaced by the end of the inspection.

Overall, the home is clean and tidy, but despite this, it does not look welcoming and homely. There is no artwork, or photos or pictures in the communal areas. However, the children have personalised items in their bedrooms. The kitchen is the heart of the home and is well used. Staff actively encourage children to help make meals and to have input into the weekly menu choices. For one child, this has increased their independence and their basic skills.

Communication within the staff team has improved, however, difficult relationships are evident when visiting the home. Children and inspectors have witnessed less than positive dialogue between staff. This hinders the children being able to learn from positive role models and interactions.

Good relationships between some staff and children are evident. Humour, cooking food together and playing board games encourage positive interactions and reduce negative or challenging behaviour.

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

Children are not at immediate risk of harm. Staff follow the appropriate processes when children are away from the home without permission. However, there is a lack of decisive action when children return, to ensure that they do not place others or themselves at risk. For example, room searches are not carried out thoroughly or

consistently. During a recent visit by police to the home, a knife was found in one bedroom.

Reviews of incidents are also inconsistent. There is a lack of support provided to children, either in-house or by accessing external resources, to help them to understand the risks arising from their behaviour. Some staff actively engage one of the children in key-work sessions to address offending behaviour and the impact on others. Nonetheless, ineffective oversight has impacted on the quality of risk management.

Serious incidents have not been reviewed by the manager. Additionally, the home's own process for reporting serious incidents to the regulator has not been followed. This impairs the staff's capacity to consistently safeguard the children, and it hinders the ability of senior managers and the regulator to have oversight of the home's effectiveness.

Risk assessments are not updated as appropriate following incidents of concern, for example, when a child returned to the home possibly under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Staff were proactive and diligent in keeping the child under observation to ensure their well-being, and sought medical advice. However, the risk assessment was not updated to reflect the concern and action to be taken.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate**

Monitoring systems continue to be ineffective and fail to identify many of the shortfalls found during the inspection. Oversight and review of documents by the manager are inconsistent and ineffective. Despite close monitoring by senior leaders, shortfalls in practice have not been identified.

Incomplete and inconsistent recording raises significant concerns regarding the accuracy and transparency of information shared with the regulator. It was not clear when the records presented to the inspector were drawn up. For example, incident report dates and dates of oversight by the manager were contradictory.

Senior staff have not received practice-related supervision. As a result, there has been a failure to identify the training needs for senior staff and other staff members. Some senior team members who supervise others offer direction and reflective discussion. These supervisory discussions are recorded well, with clear and concise actions.

Staff are not led by example or managed in a way that is consistent with the home's statement of purpose. This remains out of date and does not reflect the current care provision for children living at the home. The inability to competently manage the day-to-day operation of the home hinders the relationships between staff and children, and impairs the care planning for the children.

Managers and senior leaders failed to notify Ofsted of serious incidents relating to a child. Failure to submit notifications prevents the regulator from having full oversight

of significant events in the home, for example, damage to the home, a knife being found in one child's bedroom and police involvement.

The independent person provides an additional layer of scrutiny and has identified some shortfalls. Nonetheless, the broken and boarded-up window was not referred to, nor were serious incidents identified that should have been reported to the regulator.

The home remains subject to restriction of accommodation.

## 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         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(v))</p> | 31 December 2022 |
| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate.</p> <p>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b))</p>                                                                                | 31 December 2022 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <p>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.</p> <p>The registered person must provide a copy of the statement of purpose to HMCI and make a copy of it available upon request to—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a person who works at the home;</li> <li>a child, or a child for whom accommodation in the home is being considered;</li> <li>a parent of a child, or a parent of a child for whom accommodation in the home is being considered;</li> <li>a child's placing authority.</li> </ul> <p>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.<br/>(Regulation 16 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) (3)(a)(b) (5))</p> | <p>31 December 2022</p> |
| <p>The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if—</p> <p>there is no registered manager in respect of the home.<br/>(Regulation 27 (1)(a))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>31 December 2022</p> |
| <p>A person may only manage a children's home if—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the person is of integrity and good character;</li> <li>having regard to the size of the home, its statement of purpose, and the number and needs (including any needs arising from any disability) of the children—</li> <li>the person has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills to manage the home effectively and lead the care of children.<br/>(Regulation 28 (1)(a)(b)(i))</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <p>31 January 2023</p>  |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</li> <li>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <p>31 January 2023</p>  |

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| (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                  |
| <p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>if there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.</p> <p>A notification made under this regulation—</p> <p>must include details of—</p> <p>the matter;</p> <p>the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and</p> <p>any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter.</p> <p>(Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(e)(d)(a)(i)(ii)(iii))</p> | 31 December 2022 |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children’s home at least once each month,</p> <p>to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home’s records.</p> <p>(Regulation 44 (1)(b))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 31 March 2023    |

## Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the children’s home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. Homes will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Homes should seek, as far as possible, to maintain a domestic rather than institutional impression. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)

## **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:** SC037910

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

**Registered provider:** Hampshire County Council

**Registered provider address:** Hampshire Council, 3rd Floor, Elizabeth II Court  
North, The Castle, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG

**Responsible individual:** John Stacey

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Jill Sephton-Wright, Social Care Inspector

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