

SC038435

Registered provider: Sunfield Children's Homes Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This service is a children's home registered with Ofsted. It is also a residential special school registered by the Department for Education. Since May 2017, it has been a subsidiary of the Ruskin Mill Trust. The registered manager has been registered since April 2018.

The home is registered to accommodate 61 children who have severe and complex learning difficulties and behavioural needs. Seven placements are for children who require short breaks. There are 12 houses in the grounds of the school. At the time of this inspection, five houses were open, and were accommodating 18 children. There is also an adult accommodated in a separate house on site by staff from another organisation within the Ruskin Mill Group. The adult has no contact with children from the home.

Inspection date: 31 May 2018

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Date of last inspection: 26 September 2017

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

There have been many improvements since the last inspection. Improvements in the administration of medication, which promote children's health and welfare, have been sustained. Children enjoy positive relationships with staff, and staff teams are more

consistent. Managers and staff have improved consultation with children and involve them in day-to-day arrangements, such as menu planning. New consultation forms are being developed in different formats to make these more accessible to children. Once finalised, they will be used in key-worker sessions and in children's meetings.

Many children are making good progress. For example, one child who previously refused to go outside is now managing to leave the home and go on outings. This is significant progress for him.

The home environment also continues to improve. Communal areas are generally homely and inviting, although some houses require continued development. In one house, children's toys were locked away, and the sensory room lights needed a staff key to activate them. Children's bedrooms are reflective of their individual needs and tastes.

Senior managers continue to develop monitoring systems to help them to be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. There are some exciting developments being discussed, such as reopening the farm and widening the children's curriculum to include creating a herb garden and growing their own food. Staff state that they feel supported by the management team. They are hopeful, for the future of the houses, the children and themselves.

Some work has been undertaken to meet the requirements raised at the previous inspection and subsequent monitoring visit. However, these improvements are not yet fully embedded, and shortfalls remain.

The quality of care provided to children in some houses is not consistently good. Children's safety is compromised because staff do not always ensure that vehicles are adequately secure. The inspector witnessed, on one occasion, a car with its engine left running and doors open. This occurred while a member of staff was in a house trying to get a child to leave. This was a shortfall raised at the last inspection after a child was able to get into an unlocked vehicle.

Not all staff have achieved their level 3 qualification in residential childcare. However, it is recognised that this is an improving picture. Furthermore, managers have made significant attempts to ensure that staff undertake core training requirements.

There continue to be some shortfalls in safe recruitment practice around background checks for agency staff. Managers are not adequately scrutinising the agency's practice. As a result, they do not have the necessary assurance that all agency staff working for them have checks undertaken to meet the requirements set by regulation. This leaves the potential for unsuitable people to be working with children.

On an isolated occasion, staff did not fully implement procedures to keep a child safe. This led to one young person going missing and travelling a considerable distance from the home. Although he received a welfare check from staff on his return to the home, he did not receive a return home interview from an independent person to ascertain his wishes and feelings.

When incidents involving ground holds have taken place, there are deficits in the levels of oversight and learning. As a result, behaviour management plans do not contain sufficient guidance about how to better manage children's behaviour when it is highly challenging.

The good work carried out by staff is not reflected in some children's plans. For instance, work to help develop children's skills in the kitchen in one house is not reflected in their care plans or learning targets. As a result, managers are unable to fully understand children's progress and development.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/09/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/06/2017	Full	Inadequate
22/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/05/2016	Full	Requires improvement

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
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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(vi))	30/06/2018

This is with specific reference to when young people go missing, and in ensuring that vehicles are appropriately secure.	
The registered person must ensure that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to any individual employed to work in the children's home in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32(3)(d)) This is in respect of agency staff.	31/08/2018
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. 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. (Regulation 11 (1)(2)(a))	30/06/2018

Recommendations

- Ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45 paragraph 9.30)
- Ensure the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. ('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. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look

after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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: SC038435

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Sunfield Children's Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Clent Grove, Clent, Stourbridge, Worcestershire DY9 9PB

Responsible individual: Graeme Cheyne

Registered manager: Sarah Marshall

Inspector(s)

Sue Young, social care inspector

Louise Battersby, social care inspector

Rumbi Mangoma, social care inspector

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