

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	04/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC040491
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Cornwall Council
Registered person address	County Hall, TRURO, Cornwall, TR1 3AY

Responsible individual	Katherine Brown
Registered manager	Deborah Moses
Inspector	Sarah Canto

Inspection date	04/11/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Inadequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home	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.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Inadequate
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate

SC040491

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is inadequate because:

- This home is judged inadequate at its second, consecutive inspection. Managers do not always follow the correct child protection procedures when they identify safeguarding concerns. As a result, young people's safety is compromised outside the home.
- Leaders and managers do not have adequate oversight and monitoring of safeguarding and child protection matters. This means that staff do not all consistently follow safeguarding plans. Leaders and managers have not effectively communicated the progress and conclusions of child protection investigations. Such confusion impacts upon staff's care of young people as it does not lead to consistency in approach.
- Parts of the home do not provide a homely environment for children. Equipment needed by children, which was recommended by an occupational therapist to promote the independence of young people, has not been purchased.
- Managers and staff do not have adequate supervision arrangements in place to ensure staff practice is monitored and reviewed, and staff are supported to carry out their work.
- Young people's progress and experiences are not reviewed frequently enough and with the relevant people. Some care plans are signed only by the key worker, not indicating whether others such as the manager, young person, family or professionals, agree and will support this plan.

The children's home strengths

- Young people enjoy coming to this home. They have strong and caring relationships with staff who know them well.
- Young people are offered many opportunities to take part in activities, play and trips.
- Managers and staff care for young people with dignity and respect. They encourage young people to develop their independence where possible.
- In consultation and involvement with young people, managers and staff have improved the appearance of the entrance to the home since the previous inspection.
- Parents speak highly of the service provided to young people and report they benefit from effective communication with the home.

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
*12: The protection of children standard ensure 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— (2)(a)(i) 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; (2)(a)(iii) have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; (2)(a)(v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; (2)(a)(vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and (2)(a)(vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; (2)(e)(e) that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. In particular, produce written child protection procedures for the home and notify Ofsted of the instigation or ending of child protection enquiries (Regulation 12 (1) (2) (a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(e))	10/12/2015

*13: The leadership and management standard ensure that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— (2)(b) promotes their welfare In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— (2)(f) understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; (2)(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. In addition, provide adequate supervision for managers and staff, ensure all stakeholders are involved in the preparation and review of care plans and produce a development plan for the home (Regulation 13 (1) (b) (2)(f)(h))	10/12/2015
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* These requirements are subject to statutory requirement notice.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide a short break for up to six children and/or young people who have learning difficulties and sensory impairments. The home is managed and owned by the local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/07/2015	CH - Full	Inadequate
05/03/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
22/05/2014	CH - Full	Good
02/10/2013	CH - Interim	Inadequate Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Inadequate
Leaders and managers do not yet ensure the safety of all young people who stay at this home. When young people suffer risk of harm outside the children's home, the manager and staff do not follow child protection procedures to help keep young people safe. However, since the previous inspection, managers and staff have undertaken additional safeguarding training. As a result, when managers and staff identify concerns, they are more confident in raising these. Much of the decor and furniture in the home has not been updated over time. Parts of the home do not have a welcoming appearance. The sensory room is a space young people enjoy using but equipment is broken with no plan to repair it. Young people's bedrooms are not cosy; bed headboards have been removed and not replaced, some carpets are 14 years old and do not look clean; furniture is not easy for young people to use and some drawers are locked. Staff have personalised young people's bedrooms, for example, with a poster and individual bedding. Staff make attractive, fabric noticeboards for bedrooms. However, the noticeboards have not been finished with a fastener. Consequently, some pictures or personal photographs are tucked behind the noticeboard rather than displayed on it, giving an unfinished impression. Since the previous inspection, staff and young people have worked together on decorating and re-organising some communal areas of the home. The home now has a welcoming, colourful entrance and sitting area, which is clutter free. Young people have designated spaces to organise themselves when they arrive or leave the building. Staff and children are proud of their achievements and visitors to the home have commented positively on changes to the entrance of the home. Several young people have been enjoying short breaks in this home for many years. Staff delight in the progress made by these young people and those who have more recently started using the service. Young people have good relationships with staff, who take the time to understand and meet their needs. Young people's choice of staff member to carry out their personal care is taken into account by managers and staff. Young people experience a wide range of activities both in and out of the home. One young person said, 'I like coming here and I love the art work I do.' Caring and committed staff spend time thinking and planning activities that young people may enjoy and learn from. A staff member said, 'I love it when young people try	

new things and discover they like them.'

Young people are encouraged to be as independent as possible. As a result, young people's personal care and communication skills improve. Young people eat healthy, home cooked food and take part in preparation and clearing up at mealtimes. Staff role model and encourage young people to use good table manners and to communicate positively. Therefore, mealtimes are a pleasurable experience.

The home exudes a calm atmosphere and young people are treated with respect and dignity. Young people's needs receive individual attention. If a young person does not feel ready for overnight stays, they are able to visit the home for activities and a meal. The aim is to encourage eventual overnight stays at the young person's pace.

Parents speak highly of the service and receive detailed reports followed by telephone calls if information needs to be shared. Parents say that their children enjoy visiting the home and like the activities. One parent said, 'he can't tell me he enjoys it but I know he does; he has a big smile on his face when he goes there.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Inadequate
The service operates without a child protection procedure document which is specific to the home. Instead, wider council safeguarding policies are used. Staff recognise that some safeguarding concerns but these have not been supported or dealt with by managers in line with <i>'Working Together to Safeguard Children'</i>. When young people come to the home with unexplained physical injuries, these injuries are not properly followed up by staff due to a misinterpretation of the statutory guidance. Poor managerial oversight of safeguarding situations affects staff's ability to provide the most appropriate and safe care for young people. Staff are not equipped with all the information needed and are not informed of the outcome of investigations. Managers do not always review young people's care plans. Consequently, they are not aware of up to date safeguarding plans for young people. Because of this, information in the care plan is not always shared with the wider team, resulting in inconsistent practice. Young people in this home do not go missing. Using a combination of positive routines and clear boundaries, staff manage behaviour in a sensitive manner. They	

respond expertly to young people's behaviours by using de-escalation strategies to avoid incidents. Consequently, staff have not needed to use physical intervention with young people for over a year.

Since the previous inspection, senior managers have carried out bespoke learning sessions with managers and staff on safeguarding processes. Copies of relevant safeguarding legislation and procedures have now been distributed to, and discussed with staff. While safeguarding practice has not improved in all areas, staff now understand that they have a responsibility to raise issues of concern for young people. A member of staff told the inspector about a safeguarding concern that was escalated to parents and social workers for action. In this case, a young person was not receiving necessary medical attention. As a result of the staff member's actions, the young person's medical needs are now met.

The registered manager, who has a nursing background, considers very carefully the health needs of young people. For example, she ensures the safety of a young person with epilepsy. She also works closely with health professionals, staff and parents to assess and eliminate potential life threatening risks to the young person.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate
The registered manager and deputy manager do not receive adequate supervision and have failed to have robust managerial oversight of safeguarding in the home. Lack of regular supervision means that managers do not have the opportunity to reflect upon practice and consider priorities. The deputy manager supervises 14 staff in addition to five relief staff. During a period of unplanned manager absence, the deputy was not able to supervise all staff and simultaneously manage the home. The combination of a high number of staff to supervise and the need to run the home meant that the deputy could not supervise all staff. The statement of purpose for the home and the children's guide are out of date and are not regularly updated by the manager. Formal reviews of young people's goals and progress occur usually once a year during reviews of young people's short breaks in the home. Outside these reviews, goals are reviewed by staff on an informal and unplanned basis as and when young people achieve their goals in the home or when young people are discussed during supervision. Feedback from young people, parents and other professionals is not regularly gathered to contribute to this process. Young people's plans are signed by staff but a system does not exist for young people, parents, the	

manager of the home and relevant professionals to also sign up to plans. Due to a lack of communication in this area, staff and others may be working towards different goals for young people.

The registered manager does not have a development plan for the home. Managers agree work needs to be done, particularly to improve the home's environment. An occupational therapy report recommended changes to the home's environment which would promote and aid young people's independence. However, managers have not carried out these recommendations which include installation of ceiling hoists, rise and fall computer desks and a dining table. Funding for these items has not been requested by managers.

Staff are well organised and a shift leader is always identified on each occasion young people come to stay. The team is supportive and caring, and staff work together well. When there are differences of opinion, managers resolve these differences to ensure the smooth running of the home. Staff feel supported by each other and their managers. The whole staff team wants the best for the young people whom they look after.

Managers carefully consider which groups of young people complement each other for short breaks. Young people benefit from this careful planning and enjoy each other's company. For example, young people develop their independent skills together by helping each other make their own beds which is a significant practical and social achievement for some young people.

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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