

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	29/07/2015
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	Tracey Ledder

Inspection date	29/07/2015
Previous full inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Inadequate
There are serious 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:

- Leaders and managers fail to pursue child protection concerns in line with policies, leaving children at risk of harm.
- Leaders and managers fail to escalate concerns with the appropriate agencies when the social work team fail to manage child protection concerns in line with 'Working Together 2015' and their child protection policies.
- Leaders and managers fail to ensure that children's care and risk plans identify all known risks and fail to include comprehensive strategies to reduce the risk of harm.
- In addition, leaders and managers fail to ensure all staff are aware of the risks to children and that staff are kept up to date of child protection concerns.
- Leaders and managers have failed to ensure that staff are fully aware of safeguarding concerns for young people. As a result, staff are not able to respond to those concerns and keep the young person safe.

The children's home strengths

- Staff are caring of young people and they have established positive relationships together.
- Children and young people are supported to attend education, undertake fun and exciting activities in the community and make choices in respect of their wishes and feelings.
- The home has good relationships with parents and professionals who use the service. When required, additional support is given to families to ensure that their children's needs are met and they are at ease with the service provided by the staff.
- Children and young people make good use of and enjoy the garden. The range of toys and play equipment benefits their physical, social and emotional development.

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 In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must 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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; (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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; (2)(a)(vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; (2)(b) ensure that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm; (2)(e) and that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly	01/10/2015

13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person is required to (2)(a) 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; (2)(b) ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; (2)(f) understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child; (2)(g)(i) demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and (2)(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home	01/10/2015
14: The care planning standard In order to meet the care planning standard the register person must ensure (1)(a) children and young people receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home, in particular care plans should identify all needs and risks for children and young people and specify how needs will be met and risks managed	01/10/2015
19: Behaviour management and discipline Ensure that no measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child, in particular, body maps must not be routinely carried out and surveillance must not be used unless this form part of an agreed care plan for specific and appropriate	01/10/2015

reasons (Regulation 19 (1))	
34: Policies for the protection of children The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children's home from abuse or neglect (Regulation 34 (1)(a)(b))	01/10/2015
6: The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard the registered person must ensure that staff (2)(b)(ii) protect and promote each child's welfare; (2)(b)(vi) help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect; (2)(b)(vii) provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably and (2)(b)(viii) provide to children personal items that are appropriate for their age and understanding, in particular ensure that the home is not institutionalized and that children's bedrooms are prepared for their arrival with personal and homely items	01/10/2015

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 owned and managed by the local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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
Inadequate practice to help and protect young people has adversely affected their overall experience and progress. Leaders and managers did not inform the home's staff of the significance of safeguarding concerns for one young person in their care. As a result, staff did not have the information required to keep the child safe or to reduce the risks. One staff member stated, 'how can we keep children safe if we are not told of the risks?' Some areas in the home are neglected and do not feel welcoming. The entrance to the home is untidy and used as a storage area. Rooms are not prepared well for young people's arrival at the home. Staff do not place the young people's personal items into their bedrooms and do not ensure that each young person's bedroom reflects their identity. As a result, young people do not have a bedroom that takes into account their personal preferences. The garden is lovely; it is child friendly and offers a fun and interactive space that young people enjoy and use regularly. There is evidence that the garden and outside play is a positive activity for the young people who stay at the home. Overall children and young people make good progress in the home and they are cared for by a dedicated, committed and caring staff team. Staff know the children and young people well and when provided with key information staff are able to respond to them appropriately. Children and young people are listened to and staff support them to have a voice in the home. Where communication is difficult for young people, practical aids and signing systems are used to enable them to make choices. As a result, children and young people's preferences in relation to meals and activities are listened to and acted upon. The staff use creative strategies to help children, young people and their families to become familiar and confident with visiting the home for short breaks. As a result, some children and young people now successfully attend the home and are making good progress. The staff have good relationships with parents and professionals. Where required, additional support is given to families to ensure that they feel confident that their	

children's needs will be met. Parents are very positive about the support they receive from the staff team and state that communication is regular and good. They are happy with the care that is provided for their children.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Inadequate
Leaders and managers did not respond appropriately to two recent incidents of unexplained injuries to one young person or seriously consider whether they occurred in the home. Leaders and managers lack secure knowledge of child protection processes. As a result, staff continued to work with young people without managers undertaking any investigative steps. The safety of this young person was compromised. Leaders and managers did not raise concerns about the poor practice of partner agencies to manage safeguarding issues appropriately. As a result, there was poor sharing of information between key agencies and a lack of risk management planning. No changes were made to the care provided to respond to the concerns. As a result, one young person was not safeguarded. Positive behaviour is consistently promoted in the home. Staff use effective de-escalation techniques and creative alternative strategies to manage young people's behaviours. As a result, physical intervention is not common practice. Relationships between staff and the young people are built upon mutual respect. Staff help young people to stay safe when they use the internet. Staff understand the potential risks for young people and a specific staff member monitors the use of the internet and deals with any concerns that arise. The home has links with appropriate agencies and a route to refer on any concerns in respect of internet use. As a result, children and young people have safe access to the internet. Staffing levels are increased when needed in response to identified risks to young people and their particular needs. This is agreed as part of their care plan and ensures young people have appropriate levels of supervision to keep them safe. In addition, the physical environment is maintained safely.	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate
A lack of decisive, action by leaders and managers in respect of a child protection matter was fundamental in failing to ensure child protection policies are rigorously followed and young people are kept safe. Leaders and managers have not ensured that young people's care and support plans are kept up-to-date. Some documents do not contain important information that the staff team need to know so that they can keep young people safe and meet their care needs. Staff were unable to outline the key risks missing from documentation. As a result, not all young people are provided with the level of care they currently require. Staff have been required to complete regular 'body mapping' of young people without reason. This has led to some staff feeling uncomfortable about the practice and an acknowledgement that this could lead to complacency over marks and bruises to young people. Some staff felt that this practice was intrusive. The registered manager has spent some time working away from the home and has not consistently been in day to day control. As a result crucial information was not passed on to other agencies working with a young person and the risks and responses should another incident occur are not documented; leaving the young person at significant risk. Leaders and managers have good relationships with parents and carers. This enables parents and carers to feel confident leaving their child for their stay. Parents feel involved and able to raise concerns with the management team as and when they arise. Parents and carers report that they are kept informed of incidents and when required they come into the setting to support their children. This ensures that children and young people receive a consistent level of care despite living across two settings. Staff report that supervision is regular and meaningful. Staff said that they particularly like how their work is acknowledged and appreciated and this makes them feel valued and supported. There is a good professional development programme in place for staff. They receive high quality training by skilled facilitators. Staff are supported by leaders and managers to attend training and they are able to identify areas for their own development.	

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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