

SC063110

Suffolk County Council

Monitoring visit

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides care and accommodation for up to five female children aged between 11 and 17, who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection date: 31 May 2017

This monitoring visit

This children's home was judged inadequate at the full inspection on 26 April 2017. Five statutory requirements were raised. Two of the statutory requirement breaches resulted in the issue of compliance notices. The home is currently subject to a restriction of accommodation order. The compliance notices relate to shortfalls in the protection of children and the leadership and management of the home. A monitoring visit was undertaken on 31 May 2017 in order to evaluate the progress that the home has made in addressing these concerns.

The home has made good progress in addressing the shortfalls raised. The provider has met the two compliance notices.

The registered manager has not been working in the home. There are management cover arrangements in his absence. The acting manager provides managerial cover, alongside two deputy managers. The day-to-day management and staffing of the home have improved and the home is being managed effectively.

Appropriate measures have been taken to manage the children's relationships and to address the bullying in the home. There is a focus on better accountability in the monitoring and management of all incidents. A good level of oversight of the records made by staff has resulted in matters being addressed consistently. This has resulted in changes to staffing, discussions with children and follow-up conflict-resolution work with the children. There is a significant improvement in the oversight of the records of these incidents. The analysis of when incidents take place has

identified triggers for behaviour and hot-spots when incidents are more likely to occur. This analysis has enabled staff to take action to reduce the number of incidents in the home.

A review by the home of the staffing of holiday periods and weekends has identified that the home would benefit from a member of the management team on duty during these periods. This is to provide a consistent lead for the new staff team and consistent management of any incidents. A recruitment drive has provided two new staff, and two other posts have been offered, subject to safe-recruitment checks. The home has appointed staff who are experienced and who have a child-focused approach. The home is fully staffed and has a dedicated management team. The head of service is looking at ways to establish better vigilance and awareness of any behaviours that constitute bullying.

There has been sufficient action taken to safeguard children's welfare. The staff have achieved a significant reduction in the number of incidents of bullying in the home. There have been three incidents since 26 April 2017, one of which involved a child who had been targeted previously. A strategy meeting was convened to review the child's needs and the outcome was to move the child from the home. All of the incident records are comprehensive and provide better context to the incident and post-incident work. This work includes identifying the triggers of children's emotions and helping them to manage these feelings. The staff have been proactive in supporting the children and addressing issues resulting from the dynamics in the home. The staff have implemented planned work on addressing bullying. There is a whole-team approach to building an awareness of bullying and to reduce incidents further. This is being supported through the appointment of a staff-group facilitator and external training for the staff team.

The risk assessments (Signs of Safety plans) are clearer and more concise. There are no contradictions in these, as plans had been identified previously. Staff have updated and reviewed the risk assessments, which read more clearly and advise of any new behaviours and the actions required to reduce the level of risk. This ensures that the staff are aware of risks to individuals, to other children and to the staff.

The house has been restored to a good condition throughout. All of the repairs have been completed and there are no hazards. There is no evident damage and the home presents as a clean and comfortable environment.

There have been no incidents requiring notification to Ofsted since the last inspection. The review of the quality of care has been received by Ofsted. In future, this will be completed monthly to ensure that it remains up to date. A reference for a member of staff that was not available for review at the last inspection is in place.

The attendance in education has improved for the majority of the children in the home.

The home remains volatile at times. However, this is managed well by the staff, who have a good rapport with the children.

A restriction of accommodation notice remains in place to ensure a period of stability.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/04/2017	Full	Inadequate
08/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
21/04/2016	Full	Requires improvement
08/01/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC063110

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Suffolk County Council

Registered provider address: Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, Russell Road, Ipswich IP1 2BX

Responsible individual: Clifford James

Registered manager: Paul Plummer

Inspector

Deirdra Keating, social care inspector

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