

SC064472

Registered provider: Willows (Devon) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The registered manager has been in post since 2009. The service is part of a small organisation and is registered to care for up to four children.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 March 2020

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 24 October 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/10/2018	Full	Good
20/11/2017	Full	Good
20/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
19/12/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children live in a lovely home surrounded by countryside. The home is clean, welcoming and nurturing. Children's bedrooms reflect their personalities. The children have animals they enjoy, including cats, ponies and pigs. Children like living here.

Children are experiencing better outcomes across many aspects of their lives. For example, they all attend school and are making progress. One of the children who had been out of school for a prolonged period now attends every day.

Children feel safe and well supported by staff. They have developed trusting relationships that are built on mutual respect. Children told inspectors that the staff are brilliant. One child said that the staff have really helped them to turn things around. Children's wishes and feelings are sought, listened to and acted on. This helps children to feel loved and important.

Some progress is being made to address a culture of dated practice. The implementation of an improvement plan is underway. However, some blanket approaches to care remain. For example, rules regarding technology prevent children from managing this aspect of their lives.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Risks for children have significantly reduced. Children told inspectors they feel safe and secure living here. They are confident that staff will help them to keep safe. The support children receive has helped them to reduce risk-taking behaviours and make more positive choices. Children are proud of their achievements.

Safeguarding concerns are well managed. The registered manager acts when required to do so. In addition, she keeps comprehensive records and chronologies of concerns. This supports her to challenge other agencies and support and ensure that children's needs are prioritised.

Physical intervention is not commonplace. In most incidents, intervention is low level and staff use a guide to support children to safety. Following incidents, children benefit from good-quality discussions with staff. This provides children with an opportunity to share their views and any worries.

Children do not go missing from home on a regular basis. When they do, staff spend extensive periods of time following them to ensure that they remain safe. On one occasion, one member of staff walked 13 miles down country roads to reduce the risks for the children.

Steps taken to ensure safer recruitment are not wholly robust. For example, steps are not always taken to verify references. In addition, gaps in employment and reasons for leaving are not explored and fully understood.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

An experienced and dedicated registered manager leads this home. She is supported and complemented by an able deputy manager. Together they ensure an ethos of child-centred and nurturing care. As a result, children feel well cared for and safe.

Permanent staff receive good-quality regular supervision. They have opportunity to reflect on practice and to consider the individual children. Staff who work across several services are not afforded the same level of support. As a result, they do not always understand the children's emerging needs.

Managers do not ensure that children's records are updated in a timely way when risks and worries emerge. Records lack detail and do not provide clear strategies to prevent risks from reoccurring.

Consequences are used when children's behaviour is deemed unacceptable. The current system is not a fair one. The managers do not always consider the actions of the staff. For example, staff gave children money and the children spent it all. As a result, the children were not allowed out for two weeks. The actions of the staff were not addressed. Oversight from leaders is unusually weak in this area.

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
6: The quality and purpose of care standard The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult; and make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child's relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(b)(iv)(vi)(ix))	30/04/2020
13: The leadership and management standard The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—	30/04/2020

research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met and— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(e)(f)(g)(i)(h))	
32: Fitness of workers The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. (Regulation 32 (1))	30/04/2020
37: Other records Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; and ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37 (1)(2)(a)(b))	30/04/2020

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: SC064472

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Willows (Devon) Limited

Registered provider address: The Granary, Hinton Business Park, Tarrant Hinton, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8JF

Responsible individual: Jennifer Gould

Registered manager: Jayne Hammett

Inspectors

Tracey Ledder, Social Care Inspector

Anna Gravelle, Social Care Inspector

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