

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC067753
Inspector	Kevin Whatley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	West Sussex County Council
Registered person address	West Sussex County Council, Director of Social Services County Hall, Tower Street CHICHESTER West Sussex PO19 1QT
Responsible individual	Annie MacIver
Registered manager	Dominic Stephen Riches
Date of last inspection	14/11/2014

Inspection date	20/02/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

The home has sustained effectiveness since the last inspection of November 2014. Three requirements and five recommendations were made on that occasion; most of these have been addressed. One requirement and one recommendation are made as a result of this inspection.

Consents are now in place for the use of baby monitors for those young people who require them. For example young people who are prone to seizures during the night; the use of such listening devices enhances the level of monitoring during night time hours.

Communal fire doors have now been fitted with automatic door retainers which release when the fire alarm is activated. These additions along with the continued regular testing of alarms staff and young people undertaking evacuation drills ensures the home takes appropriate actions in response to the risk of fire.

Actions to repair and improve a bathroom have not yet been completed. One bathroom continues to be in need of refurbishment with bath sides missing and the facility looking very worn. Records showed that the authority have arranged for the work to be completed at the end of this month.

Young people can now exit their bedrooms using appropriate locks. Concerns at the previous inspection regarding some bedroom doors not having openers from the inside have been rectified. Doors have been fitted with thumb locks which allow young people to leave their room should they wish while also providing access to staff should they need to enter in an emergency.

Behaviour management approaches which previously stated doors can be held as a matter of practice have been amended. Staff working with certain young people

have been provided with additional training and guidance around managing aggressive and violent events. This includes what actions to take regarding bedroom areas at times of targeted violence toward them. As a result the number of occasions where such behaviour takes place is steadily reducing with very few situations where young people have been needed to be kept safe behind doors. When this has taken place it is predominantly for a few seconds to allow for other young people to exit the vicinity for their own protection. Where this is the case all parties are informed including parents/carers and the head of service for the authority. These incidents are closely monitored by the management team and the homes restraint trainer to ensure every possible alternative is sought to reduce the risk of seclusion when young people reach the point of crisis.

Since the last inspection staff have been given clear guidance as to the appropriate storage of equipment and toiletries which is now being adhered to. Bathrooms were found to be free from significant clutter with none being seen to be misused for the storage of items.

The process for the recruitment of new staff has been amended to confirm that references have been verified. The Registered Manager stated that he and his assistant managers are now responsible for completing recruitment checks and that this includes contacting referees by phone to confirm their authenticity. No new staff have been employed since the last inspection.

Records kept for the purposes of running the home are now completed accurately. These include the complaints and child protection logs with appropriately bound books being introduced to further enhance the process and ensure they cannot be tampered with.

The home has a suitable medication storage and administration process that in general meets the needs of young people and is accurate. Only staff who are trained in the giving of medicines are allowed to do so. Records were up to date and accurate. Minor errors were found in documentation associated with the giving of medication covertly. While most young people who have their medicines concealed had this confirmed by the person prescribing the drug several did not have written consent on file.

The outside of the home is in need of some upkeep, while the external boundaries do not provide young people with adequate privacy. The garden area appears to have suffered some wear and tear which has been exasperated by the winter weather. Grass is growing through the paving, some of the guttering is leaking while other parts have accumulated debris and mud. The external boundary of the home is formed of brick and metal fencing. Where there is just fencing there is a little or no privacy provided for young people with clear views from the adjacent playing fields of the home's garden and indeed bedroom windows. Previous attempts at improving this have not been successful with a number of bushes having been planted showing poor levels of growth which provide scant cover. While this remains

the case young people will not have their privacy suitably protected.

In general the living environment has been suitably maintained internally with plans to divide the home into two distinct areas beginning to take shape. This will enable young people to have their specific needs met without potential interruption from other young people. It is hoped that a move to dividing the home into two separate living spaces will significantly enhance the experience of young people. Living areas were found to be clean and hygienic with bedrooms being personalised wherever possible.

Young people continue to receive a good standard of care. Interactions between young people and staff confirmed a good level of commitment and appreciation of need. Young people appeared comfortable in the company of the adults who look after them while staff displayed considerable insight into how best to meet their complex needs. Mealtimes are an important part of the day with young people benefitting from a calm and relaxed atmosphere. The Registered Manager noted that in recent weeks there has been a high level of staff sickness. Shortfalls have been met through the use of regular agency staff who know the home well. Comments from parents/carers were most positive about the quality of care provided to young people, the progress they make in themselves and the wider impact of improving family life.

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home provides care and support for a maximum of 16 children and children with complex needs. The home can accommodate children and children with both physical and learning disabilities, some of whom may display challenging behaviour. The home can provide permanent placements or short breaks.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/11/2014	Full	good
12/02/2014	Interim	good progress
16/05/2013	Full	good
18/01/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
31 (2001)	The Registered person shall not use the premises for the purposes of a children's home unless they are in a location, and of a physical design and layout, which are suitable for the purpose of achieving the aims and objectives set out in the home's statement of purpose; in particular take actions to ensure the privacy of children and young people living at the home (Regulation 31 (1))	29/05/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take

account of the following recommendation(s):

- There is a written record of all medication, treatment and first aid given to children during their placement; in particular ensure that written consents are obtained from the persons who prescribe medicines that are to be administered covertly (NMS 6.15)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.