

SC361789

Registered provider: Cornwall Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning difficulties.

The home is owned by a local authority. It is situated near a school for children who have additional needs and a children's home that offers short breaks.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 March 2019

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

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 29 November 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/11/2018	Full	Inadequate
15/11/2017	Full	Good
16/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
13/10/2016	Full	Good

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
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— 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; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation (1)(a)(b)(2)(b)(vi)(c)(i)) In particular: ■ Prior to young people moving, consider arrangements about what contact young people will have with staff when they move to a new home. ■ Continue building the sensory room planned for young people. ■ Continue to improve the home environment so that it can be as homely as possible.	27/05/2019
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—	27/05/2019

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;

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(f)(h))

In particular:

- Ensure that placement plans include young people's short- and long-term aims.
- Develop a system to ensure that parents and other relevant people receive regular, timely and necessary feedback about young people.
- Embed management quality assurance, oversight and monitoring systems. In particular, to include regular review of: collective incidents and complaints; feedback from young people; medication; supervision; and the children's guide.
- Complete the manager's review of quality of care.
- Build on relationships between the school and home so that young people receive informed and consistent care.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Young people's experiences in this home have improved. Individualised care and attention to young people have enhanced their day-to-day life experiences and some young people have made progress.

Young people's planning documents have improved but do not contain all necessary information. They do not refer to short- and long-term aims to help young people, staff, parents and professionals focus on young people's progress and future plans. However, placement plans are concise, well written and contain crucial information that staff need to know about how to care for young people. Information from external professionals, such as occupational therapists and mental health professionals, is woven into plans to help young people communicate their views.

Good arrangements are in place for a young person who is being introduced to their new home and staff. The young person has lived in the home for many years, but the manager recognises that further thought needs to be given about which staff should maintain contact with the young person and how.

Parents are welcomed to the home and recognise the care and commitment from staff to young people. Parents do receive information, but a system is not in place to ensure that they have regular, timely and necessary feedback about young people's progress and experiences.

Night-time arrangements are now in place so that young people receive the same quality of care during the day and at night. The organisation's policy has changed and now qualified residential care workers have recently been appointed to start providing waking night care.

Sufficient staffing means that young people can now go out and enjoy community facilities regularly, such as horse riding and swimming. Holidays did not take place in the last year due to staff shortages, but holidays are now being planned. Consultation work has started to take place with children so that their views about the home and their care can be heard and acted on. All the young people have advocates and the manager is monitoring how effective this is for young people.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Individual core staff teams have recently been introduced for young people to provide stability and continuity. As staff's expectations of young people's progress and behaviour increase, new boundaries have been introduced for some young people. This has contributed to some incidents of concern, at times leading to staff being hurt. These incidents are responded to appropriately and reviewed by the manager, and risks are managed appropriately.

Staff understand the importance of being alert to safeguarding and child protection issues, particularly given the communication needs that the young people they look after have. The manager recognises that this is an area that needs increased focus and is making plans to ensure that safeguarding issues are regularly discussed by the team.

The need for staff to use physical intervention has considerably reduced. Staff have used it once since the monitoring visit as a last resort with minimal force, in line with the young person's risk assessment. This intervention was recorded appropriately, although it is noted that the document template refers to pupils and not young people. Staff have received training from learning disability professionals on reducing the need for physical intervention and promoting quality of life. Young people's self-harming behaviour has reduced significantly since the monitoring visit in January.

Recruitment records sampled meet requirements and managers have taken on board advice from inspections of other homes within the organisation, to meet safer recruitment guidance.

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

The current manager has been in post since October 2018 and is not yet registered with Ofsted. However, he has submitted his application and an interview is planned for early April 2019.

The manager has worked hard with the support of the registered individual and a senior manager to make changes in line with the home's improvement plan. These changes are mainly in their infancy. A significant achievement is a stable, permanent staff team that meets the needs of the young people. Vacancies have been filled and those seconded staff have either permanent posts or have returned to their substantive roles. Staff who have been on sickness leave due to work-related circumstances are now back at work on a supported return to work programme.

Staff are adjusting to a safer working environment and the team feels enthusiastic and supported. Staff are looking forward to building on the positive changes made. Managers have commissioned advanced training on autistic spectrum disorder and staff have been able to apply this knowledge to individual young people they work with. Staff have confidence in the manager and each other. They receive effective supervision that sets out expectations and standards. However, greater attention needs to be paid to ensure that all information is up to date on personnel files, and when staff transfer from one home to another within the organisation.

Much of the requirements from the previous inspection are now met, although some actions have just started or need embedding into practice. Until recently, managers have needed to focus on core safety and practice issues. The next stage involves consolidating management oversight and monitoring in key areas such as reviewing incidents collectively and medication administration. Other areas that need attention are the revision of the children's guide and the manager's quality assurance report which is out of date. Complaints and concerns are listened to and responded to. Further work needs to be done to collate these complaints centrally and apply any learning to practice.

The home has experienced difficulties in communication with some of the schools that young people attend. At times, one setting or another has not had full information about issues or incidents that have occurred for young people. The manager has recognised this problem and effective working relationships are being built. Social workers recognise the positive changes to the home and have confidence in the managers and staff in their care of the young people.

The restrictive elements of the home are significantly reduced. For example, young people can now switch lights on and off and door alarms are not in place when young people are assessed to not need them. When door alarms are needed, it is with the full knowledge of those with parental responsibility and social workers. Although improvements have been made to the environment, it still has an institutional feel in relation to its layout and decoration, such as paper towel dispensers. Managers are formulating plans to address these issues.

The registered individual has applied to Ofsted to reduce the maximum numbers of children and young people who can be looked after in this home from six to four. This is a responsible action in recognition of the high level of needs of young people, who live alongside each other.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC361789

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Cornwall Council, Accounts Payable, PO Box 727, Truro TR1 9GP

Responsible individual: Tony Phillips-Jones

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Sarah Canto, social care inspector

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