

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	14/11/2016
Unique reference number	SC363268
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	New Forest Care Ltd
Registered provider address	Bartley Cross Office, Chinkham Road, Bartley, Southampton SO40 2LF

Responsible individual	Michael Ferne
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Amanda Maxwell

Inspection date	14/11/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC363268

Summary of findings

The children's home's provision is good because:

- Children have made good progress from their starting points since arriving at the home.
- Staff support and encourage children to develop social and personal skills by completing basic household chores and taking part in activities.
- Children are developing strategies, which assist them to self-regulate and moderate their behaviour and emotions. Staff also use other services and provisions that promote children's emotional well-being.
- Staff support and encourage children to attend and engage in full-time education and each child is making good progress.
- Children have good relationships with staff, and each child has a key adult whom they can trust and confide in. Staff are child-focused, caring and nurturing in their approach with children.
- Staff are calm and consistent in their approach, providing children with clarity about acceptable behaviour in the home.
- Children are developing positive relationships with others. Staff guide, advise and educate them about appropriate and acceptable interactions with others.
- Staff are positive and proactive in their approach with children, seeking to find solutions and working through the challenges that they face.
- Children are involved in decisions made in the home, and staff consult them when planning meals and activities. Each child has personalised their bedroom and chosen how to decorate it.
- Leaders and managers have positive relationships with agencies and others outside of the home. This is evident in plans, and through the joint decision-making to manage risk and meet the complex needs of children placed.
- Staff receive regular and effective supervision and appraisal of their practice. Staff access a wide variety of training, which is specific to their roles.
- Some recommendations made as a result of this inspection are administrative in nature, but the need to review, with a view to reducing, the use of restraint, is also a practice issue.

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of the name of the person appointed and the date on which it takes effect. (Regulation 27 (2)(a) and (b))	19/12/2016
Behaviour management policies and records The registered person must ensure that: Within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes: Details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure A description of the measure and its duration Details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure The effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure and A description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(ii)(iv)(v)(vii)(viii))	01/02/2017

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- When restraint involves the use of force, the force used must not be more than is necessary and should be applied in a way that is proportionate, i.e. the minimum amount of force necessary to avert injury or serious damage to property for the shortest possible time ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 48, paragraph 9.50). Specifically, plans should detail a consistent and staged approach which is to

be followed.

- Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59).
- All managers working in a children's home must have the qualification in regulation 28 (2) within the relevant timescales listed in regulation 28 (3). All staff in a care role, excluding external agency or bank staff, must have the qualification in regulation 32 (4) within relevant timescales listed in regulation 32 (5). The registered person may extend the time period if the member of staff hasn't worked in the role for a prolonged period, such as sick leave or maternity leave, or if it is not reasonable to expect the member of staff to complete in this timescale due to the nature of the hours they work ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.12).
- As set out in regulations 31-33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1). In particular, evidence that references are verified.
- When establishing the home, the registered person must ensure that it is suitably located so that children are effectively safeguarded and can access services to meet needs identified in their relevant plans. Under regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. Providers should refer to the non-statutory advice about the location assessment process ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1).
- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4).

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private company which also owns several other homes in the local area and a school. It is located on the edge of a rural area. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children and young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/11/2015	Full	Outstanding
25/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/07/2014	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Children make good progress following their arrival at the home. They are learning positive ways to manage their behaviour and emotions. Each is building beneficial, trusting relationships with staff. Staff are child-focused and nurturing in their approach. They support children to explore and work through the difficulties they experience. Staff are knowledgeable and have good insight about the needs of those in their care. Detailed care plans provide clarity about routines and needs. Plans thoroughly explore education, health and therapy needs. Other specific information includes details about their likes and dislikes. Children have clear aims and objectives, with individual targets set, and staff regularly review and monitor these at the multi-disciplinary progress meetings. Plans are shared with children, involving and engaging them in areas to develop and improve. Staff complete frequent key work sessions with children. They allow opportunities for young people to talk through individual challenges, develop relationships and build trust. The home's house meetings are used to talk through any issues in the home between peers. Staff support children to learn positive ways to manage conflict and build relationships between each other. They have provided children with information about bullying and the boundaries and expectations of the home. The voice of the children is evident throughout the home. Children have been involved in choosing soft furnishings, personalising bedrooms, decoration schemes, menus and activities. Staff involve children through key working meetings, in reviews and decision-making about their daily care. Each child knows how to complain if needed. The home's children's guide provides detail about what to expect while living at the home. It details routines and how needs will be met. It provides information about how to make a complaint but lacks details about advocacy support. Each child is engaged in full-time education, and they have good attendance. Those who have not previously attended education are now attending daily. Each child is making progress at school and these achievements are celebrated. Positive relationships between home and school promote consistency in approach. Staff in the home are aware of the school day's positives and negatives and support children accordingly on their return to the home. Staff support children to attend to all of their physical and emotional health needs.	

They support them to address long-standing health issues, which is having a positive impact on their physical and emotional well-being. Children are engaging in a variety of services and staff refer on to specialist services when required. One child is overdue a health assessment and staff have plans in place to address this.

Mealtimes are a social event, with children sitting together with staff to share a meal and talk about the day's achievements. Children enjoy a nutritious, well-balanced diet.

Children are supported to engage in a wide variety of activities. They are physically active and staff encourage each child to have a healthy lifestyle. Children attend a variety of local clubs and voluntary groups, which enables them to make friends and develop peer relationships. Staff offer home-based activities, including board games, reading and cooking, all of which are developing their social and life skills. Staff support children to complete life story books, which are both a pictorial history and a diary for each child. They tell a story and show a child's achievements, celebrations and favoured activities. Children are proud of their books and the story they tell.

Staff support children to attend contact with their families. They support them to maintain positive links with family and friends and request reviews when required.

Senior managers within the organisation complete pre-admission assessments following receipt of a referral. They implement transition plans which include opportunities for a child to visit the home and for staff to meet and observe a prospective new admission to the home. Despite this, there is limited evidence to show what managers have concluded from this. They document the basic needs of a child but the more detailed needs and risks a child presents are not explored.

The home has a warm, homely feel to it. There are long-term plans in place to improve the kitchen area. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children. The manager feels the home is best suited to a maximum of two children.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Children live in a safe and secure environment, and they each have an adult (their key worker) in whom they can trust and confide. The home is well maintained, and any damage is swiftly addressed. Staff are knowledgeable and able to identify and respond to risks quickly and sensitively.	

Staff have good knowledge and insight about risk factors. They understand the home's policies and procedures, and access annual training which updates and refreshes their knowledge and practice. This has included information about child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and radicalisation.

There have been no complaints or allegations made by children or others since the last inspection of the home.

Staff are trained in the home's preferred method of behaviour management, with one member of staff enrolled on the next planned refresher session. Staff follow behaviour support plans that detail behaviours a child may exhibit. Plans do not detail the preferred physical intervention strategy to be used, and this risks inconsistency in approach. There is an over-reliance on physical intervention, which has, on occasions, been long in duration. Children have sustained minor injuries during physical interventions. Records lack evidence that these have been robustly monitored and evaluated. Children and staff are debriefed, but there is no evidence that there have been any lessons learned following these.

Staff use sanctions, which are generally linked to the behaviour which prompted them. On occasions, staff have given children multiple sanctions as a consequence of a single negative behaviour. The records lack clarity and detail (for example whether reviews have taken place in the time frame recommended or whether young people's views on the sanction have been sought) which inhibits robust monitoring and evaluation. Sanctions are not often reparative in their nature and children are frequently subject to the same type of sanction for several days.

Risk assessments detail actions and interventions which will keep children safer. Staff update risk assessments and request reviews when required. Staff provide support and education to children, promoting their knowledge and understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

The home's location risk assessment considers many risk factors within the local surrounding community, but lacks information from external sources and does not consider all risk factors associated with the location of the home and the immediate neighbourhood.

The safety in the home is supported by regular environment checks which staff complete. Managers have not maintained fire records to evidence all fire drills completed in the home, although these are also recorded in children's risk assessments.

There have been no episodes of missing since the last inspection. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities if an incident occurs.

Staff follow robust systems and procedures to manage and administer medication

and all staff have received medication training.

Vetting and safer recruitment processes are insufficiently robust. There was no evidence to show that references had been verified.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The home is well managed and led by a day-to-day manager. The previously registered manager has moved into a new role but continues to provide some oversight in the home. Ofsted were not informed at the time that the registered manager stepped away from the day-to-day role and a new manager was appointed. There are effective systems and processes in place to evaluate the quality of care. Leaders and managers have a good insight into the home's strengths and weaknesses and aspire to achieve a high standard of care for children. The independent person visits the home monthly, providing an additional layer of scrutiny and challenge. Leaders and managers act on findings from the independent visits and other reviews and audits of the home. They do not formally evidence their plans in the light of these reports. The day-to-day manager has good knowledge and understanding of each child's plans, aims and objectives. They have robust, positive relationships with children, ensuring that they are available for them to talk through worries and anxieties. Newly appointed staff are provided with a thorough induction to the home. They complete a probation period in which their practice and knowledge is regularly reviewed and monitored. Staff are suitably qualified and new staff are enrolled and working towards the required qualification. One member of staff has not achieved the required qualification in the prescribed timescale. Managers have identified this and an action plan is in place to address this. Staff access a varied programme of training specific to their role. Staff have updated their safeguarding knowledge with a clear understanding of all current risk factors and considerations. They access regular effective supervision and their	

performance is appraised at least annually.

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 children looked after 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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