

SC363268

Registered provider: New Forest Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties and learning disabilities.

There has been no registered manager since February 2025.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 May 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 4 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/03/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/01/2024	Full	Outstanding
21/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
08/02/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Committed staff have developed warm and positive relationships with the children. Staff talk to the children about difficult events in the children's lives with patience and understanding. As a result, children enjoy living at this home.

Children have fun. Staff encourage the children to join clubs and try new experiences. One child recently attended a Scout camp. This has had a positive effect on the child's self-esteem. Another child celebrated their birthday with a spa day with their chosen staff.

Children's education is viewed as important by staff. Staff have worked closely with the children's schools to create strategies to overcome barriers to the children's attendance. This has resulted in one child attending school more regularly, while one child has been helped to complete their GCSEs due to adaptations made to their timetable.

Children are helped to stay in contact with those that are important to them. The time the children spend with their families has improved for all the children. This helps the children to develop links with their homes and build relationships with their families.

Children have been helped to learn age-appropriate life skills. For one child, they are taking better care of their personal hygiene and helps staff to prepare healthy, balanced meals. Another child is older and is being helped to prepare for a more focused independence plan. As a result, the children take more responsibility for their care in a child-centred way.

Children have been helped to process their previous experiences in fun and creative ways. Staff have recently organised a 'floor picnic', where children were helped to shop for ingredients and then had their evening meal together in the lounge. This demonstrates the flexibility in the new manager's approach to children's care. As a result, children are making more frequent requests to make changes to their care. For example, children have been listened to and now have later bedtimes, and one child requested a visual planner to help reduce anxieties about upcoming events.

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

Staff prioritise the health and well-being of the children. They make sure that the children have the support they need to access appropriate services to ensure their health needs are met.

Positive behaviour is encouraged and rewarded. Staff encourage the children to make good decisions about their lives through reward systems and consistent boundaries. The children's achievements are celebrated spontaneously and in line with the children's interests.

When the children have used discriminatory language, staff challenge this in an educational, child-focused manner. Staff understand the children's motivations and focus on improving their understanding of the words they use and the effect on others. This has helped the children to develop their relationships with staff and improve their bonds.

Staff take action to find the children when they are missing from home. They work well with partner agencies, such as the police, to ensure they return safely. Staff have helped one child to manage their sleep pattern so that they have been able to access important events in their lives. However, the children's plans remain unclear about the risks and effects of these experiences on the children and do not clearly describe the actions staff should take in response. The children's plans do not detail consultations with relevant professionals when these have taken place. As a result, the responses from staff are inconsistent.

When the children make allegations of harm against staff, managers speak to the children and work with safeguarding partners to investigate their concerns. However, the children are not always able to speak with an external professional about their concerns. As a result, managers cannot be confident that the children's views have been independently obtained and that they are satisfied with the care they have received.

Physical intervention is used only when necessary to keep the children safe. Records of the use of restraint are detailed; however, managers have not yet taken action to ensure that they scrutinise the use of restraint by staff effectively. This means that opportunities for identifying potential learning have been missed.

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

The manager has applied to be registered with Ofsted. He demonstrates a good understanding of the progress that the children have made. The manager is passionate about the children receiving a nurturing experience of care. An experienced responsible individual is supporting the manager in his new role and is regularly present in the home.

Staff speak positively about the support they receive from leaders. Regular supervision sessions include consideration of staff well-being, the individual needs of the children and safeguarding topics. Staff say that communication within the team has improved. This has resulted in the children receiving more consistent care.

The manager works closely with people who are important to the children. Parents say that they are happy with the care provided and that communication from staff is good. External professionals also speak positively about the quality of care that the children receive.

Managers have used a helpful system to identify patterns in the children's behaviour. This has helped staff to put in place more relevant support strategies at times of need.

As a result, one child has been more able to manage their emotions, and the use of restraint has decreased significantly.

Managers' monitoring systems are not yet effective. A recent quality assurance exercise was not effective in identifying the shortfalls in the care for the children and leaders have not yet taken effective action to address all the requirements made at the last inspection.

Some of the children's local authority care plans were not held in the children's records. As a result, managers are unable to review the children's care effectively in line with their identified needs to ensure they have the resources they need to thrive.

Children have not always received their statutory return home interviews and managers were unable to demonstrate that they had challenged the responsible authorities. As a result, opportunities to better understand the children's motivations for leaving the home have been missed.

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, The 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 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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) In particular, ensure that children's case records are up to date and reflect their most recent statutory care plans. In particular, ensure that children receive their statutory return home interviews when they have been missing from care and challenge partner agencies when required.	30 June 2025
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;	30 June 2025

have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's plans demonstrate the specific risks that children are exposed to and clearly describe the actions that staff should take to manage these risks. Strategies used to manage risk should reflect any consultation with relevant professionals. This requirement is restated.	
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(b)(i))	30 June 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children have the opportunity to speak to an independent person about their experiences following an allegation of harm against a member of staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.11)

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: SC363268

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: New Forest Care Limited

Registered provider address: West Shore House, West Street, Hythe, Southampton, Hampshire SO45 6AA

Responsible individual: Alex Gooderham

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Glen Strowbridge, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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