

SC368137

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two children or young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a private provider of education and care.

Visit dates: 15 to 16 December 2020

Previous inspection date: 25 July 2019

Previous inspection judgement: Good

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

The staff succeed in building trusting and nurturing relationships with the young person currently living at the home, who is settled and making progress.

The staff understand the young person and communicate effectively with her. They understand her anxieties and fears. They use a trauma-informed approach to help the young person to understand her past and build resilience for the future. The staff are clear about the aims of the young person's placement and are helping her to develop trust and express her feelings at her pace.

The staff ensure that the young person's healthcare needs are fully met. Staff are guided by an informative healthcare plan that gives them comprehensive strategies and guidance.

The young person consistently refuses to engage in education. Various plans have been put in place to try to encourage her to attend planned sessions with her tutor, but these have not been successful. Concerns about the young person's lack of educational progress have recently been escalated to senior education professionals.

The staff encourage the young person to learn new skills and hobbies. She enjoys playing board games with the staff, shopping trips and horse riding.

The safety of children

The young person describes the home as 'the safest place that I have ever lived in'. Incidents happen less often. The young person does not regularly go missing and is no longer making so many allegations about the staff. If the young person does make an allegation, it is taken seriously, referred to the appropriate safeguarding professionals and thoroughly investigated.

Routines run smoothly in the home. Rules and boundaries are clear and consistently implemented. The young person is praised and rewarded for making positive choices and is helped and supported to learn from her mistakes rather than being punished.

Risk assessments are comprehensive and offer the staff clear guidance and strategies to use to manage any identified risks. Any incidents are promptly de-escalated and evaluated by the manager to identify any learning for the staff.

Internet safety is taken seriously. The staff are vigilant and use professional curiosity to monitor who the young person is speaking to on the internet or on her phone and to ensure that she is not accessing any inappropriate sites.

Leaders and managers

The staff report that the registered manager provides consistent leadership in the home, and that they feel well supported and staff morale is good.

The staff are committed and caring and benefit from regular, good-quality supervision. They receive comprehensive training in all the topics that they need in order to care for the young person effectively.

The house provides a homely and well-decorated environment for the young person. The staff encourage the young person to be involved in the day-to-day activities of the home, such as keeping her bedroom tidy and preparing and cooking meals. These activities help the young person to develop a sense of belonging.

The quality of recording in the home has improved. Records are now informative and comprehensive and ensure that any incidents can be fully evaluated.

The staff support the young person well through Covid-19 restrictions by helping her to understand why the restrictions are in place and why she must follow the guidance, and are supporting her to stay in touch with her family through online video calls.

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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;	29 January 2021

help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment;

help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible;

help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans.
(Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(viii)(x))

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC368137

Registered provider: Phoenix Childcare Ltd

Registered provider address: The Hub, Seckington Cross, Winkleigh, Devon EX19 8EY

Responsible individual: Stephen Nicholson

Registered manager: Jamie Inch

Inspector

Tina Maddison, Social Care Inspector

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