

SC385809

Registered provider: Fair Ways

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and is registered to provide care for up to five children who experience social and emotional difficulties. Children can access education at one of the provider's two schools, and they can access therapy through the provider's 'hub'. At the time of this inspection, three children were living in the home.

The manager is in the process of registering with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 July 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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 11 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/03/2025	Full	Good
05/12/2023	Full	Good
30/03/2023	Full	Good
15/09/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making steady progress in the home. Following a period of instability, children and staff are rebuilding trusting relationships. Newly appointed staff are supported to familiarise themselves with children's histories. This enables staff to provide informed care that is in line with the home's statement of purpose.

Staff understand the importance of children spending time with their families and other people who are important to them. Staff often support children to visit family members. Good communication between staff and professionals means that well-considered decisions can be made in the children's best interests.

Staff and managers proactively advocate for children. Effective partnership working with agencies ensures that children receive the high standards of service expected from professionals. However, on occasion, when these standards fall short, the escalation to address concerns is not timely. Staff support and encourage children to attend their own meetings and reviews. Positively, children's voices are heard and acted on.

The health and education of the children are a priority for staff. One child has successfully secured a place at college. When children are not in full-time education, staff support children in the home environment through individual educational activities while alternative arrangements are secured, which helps children to maintain a routine.

Children's health needs are consistently met through regular attendance at necessary health appointments and specialist reviews. Staff and managers proactively address concerns with professionals through regular communication with children's local authority social worker and lead professionals.

Children benefit from a range of activities outside of the home. They are able to attend sporting events, including sailing trips. The home has recently completed renovations, which provide an open-plan living area and access to a large garden. These changes enable plentiful opportunities for children to socialise and enjoy the outdoor space.

When children move into the home, following a suitable induction, they can personalise their own space. The matching of children's needs considers those children already living in the home. However, the home's children's guide is not regularly reviewed and contains out-of-date information, including staff information and photographs. Older children are helped to prepare for independence, although they do not receive consistent support to enable them to learn practical skills such as cooking and budgeting.

Children's cultural and religious needs are respected by staff. Children's identity needs are sensitively met by caring staff, who ensure that children maintain a sense of belonging.

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

Children and staff are rebuilding trusting relationships, which has promoted an atmosphere of calmness in the home. Children readily approach staff if they are worried or have concerns. The mental health of children is important to staff, who make a conscious effort to engage with children to explore and support their emotional well-being.

Staff manage negative behaviour in line with children's detailed support plans. Physical intervention is only used when necessary and staff complete timely key-work sessions to explore children's thoughts and feelings. Reparation between children is prioritised. Incidents are generally well recorded. However, at times, information is not written in a way that is helpful to the child, should they wish to access their records either now or in the future. For instance, some records include comments that do not distinguish between fact and opinion.

The quality of children's risk assessments is variable. Information is not always up to date and some omissions prevent new staff from understanding the risk and how to manage this in the event of an incident. Although this has had no direct impact on the safety and well-being of children, staff have not fulfilled their responsibilities in ensuring that all necessary information and records are kept up to date.

Creative and empathic staff make positive attempts to dissuade children from leaving the home and going missing. However, when this is not successful, staff actively follow the child's individual missing-from-care procedure when they leave the home. Effective working relationships with the police mean that children are safely returned to the home at the earliest opportunity.

Allegations against staff are managed sensitively and in a child-focused way. Children can speak to a chosen adult and know who to contact should they wish to make a complaint. The manager actively reviews allegations, and any learning is shared via regular team meetings and reflective group sessions.

All staff have completed mandatory training, including safeguarding. New staff have commented that the quality of training is good, enabling them to feel confident when taking up their duties in the home.

Overall, staff work effectively to keep children safe and to promote their well-being. However, there are occasional lapses in timely recording and the updating of documents. This prevents the manager and senior leaders from having effective and timely oversight of ongoing safeguarding matters.

Health and safety arrangements are of a good standard. The home is well maintained, and children are actively encouraged to take part in regular fire drills. This ensures that children know what to do in an emergency to keep themselves and others safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is currently in the process of registering with Ofsted. It is early days for the home's restructure and the integration of the new members of staff. However, managers and senior leaders have a shared vision, which is evident in the home's workforce development plan. As a result, there are high expectations of staff practice and outcomes for children.

All staff are supported by committed managers, who know the home's current strengths and areas for development. Staff say that they are well supported and that they have received increased levels of support through the recent period of instability and challenging incidents.

Monitoring systems and quality assurance are inconsistent due to the increase in demands on staff and managers and a recent reduction in staffing, including managers. However, the manager and senior leaders are taking effective and immediate action to address this. It is positive that the manager had identified some of the shortfalls found at the inspection.

Staff have continued to have access to good-quality training to support the complex needs and behaviours of children, as a result of the priority given to this by the leadership team. Staff welcome specialist training, for example on epilepsy management and ligature safety.

The senior leadership team has actively addressed staff vacancies, including managers. This provides stability and consistency in the staff team and a positive environment for the children.

All staff, including managers, have received supervision. This is variable in quality. Nonetheless, staff say that this has been beneficial and enables an opportunity to discuss their own well-being and development.

The manager's own quality of care review is reflective of recent issues and the actions required to rectify these. The independent visitor provides an additional layer of scrutiny, and the manager has plans to further improve the effectiveness of the visits to assist in the development of the home.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff help each child to prepare for any moves from the home, and support them to develop practical skills such as cooking, housework, budgeting and personal self-care. As the home will have a day-to-day understanding of young people's capabilities and needs, children's homes staff will have a valuable contribution to make to the planning for these moves and should have clear assessments in place to underpin this. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 17, paragraphs 3.27 and 3.28)
- The registered person should review and revise, where appropriate, the statement of purpose (regulation 16(3)(a)) and update the children's guide as necessary, and make sure children are given an explanation of any changes. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.23)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff consistently follow the home's policies and procedures for the benefit of the children in the home's care. Everyone working at the home must understand their roles and responsibilities and what they are authorised to decide on their own initiative. There should be clear lines of accountability. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: SC385809

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Fair Ways

Registered provider address: Fair Ways, Building 1000, Lakeside North Harbour, Western Road, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO6 3EN

Responsible individual: Bret Noades

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Jill Sephton-Wright, Social Care Inspector

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