

SC407430

Registered provider: Wessex College

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for four young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is one of five children's homes operated by a private organisation. The organisation also provides an independent school where young people from this home can attend.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 June 2017

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

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: 16 November 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home requires improvement to be good because:

- The home does not currently have a full staff team in place to provide care for the young people.
- Records at the home vary in quality. Some do not provide a comprehensive record of events, evidence of work undertaken by staff or actions taken to prevent reoccurrence of situations.
- The home's statement of purpose was last reviewed in December 2016. Since then, there have been significant changes in the staff team.
- The independent person's reports are not currently being sent to Ofsted.
- When a young person has been physically restrained, there are occasions when the debrief is carried out by a member of staff who was involved in the restraint.

The children's home's strengths:

- Safeguarding arrangements are strong and staff interviewed demonstrated a good working knowledge of good safeguarding practices.
- The new manager has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement of the home. He has plans in place to develop and improve the home.
- Most young people have reduced their risk-taking behaviours.
- Most young people have learned to manage their own behaviour well.
- Most young people are making good progress in their education.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/11/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/07/2016	Full	Good
22/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/08/2015	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
13: The leadership and management standard 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 lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose, ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate, ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child, ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child and ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e))	31/08/2017
16: Statement of purpose The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. In particular, this document needs to be reviewed and updated with any changes of staff. (Regulation 16 (1))	31/08/2017
44: Independent person: visits and reports The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to HMCI. (Regulation 44 (7)(a))	31/08/2017

Recommendations

- Any child who has been restrained should be given the opportunity to express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, ideally within 24 hours of the restraint incident, taking the age of the child and the circumstances of the restraint into account. In some cases, children may need

longer to work through their feelings, so a record that the child has talked about their feelings should be made no longer than 5 days after the incident of restraint. In particular, this work should be undertaken by someone who was not involved in the restraint. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', pages 49 and 50, paragraph 9.60)

- Staff should be 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. In particular, staff need to ensure that records are of a consistent, good quality. This includes details of actions taken in light of events and strategies to prevent reoccurrence. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Inspection judgements

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

Young people have individualised plans which are reviewed and where required amended after events or incidents. Due to the number of different staff members caring for the young people, these are not always consistently applied.

Since moving into the home, most young people are making good progress at school. Young people receive a mix of home tutoring and attending the organisation's school. One young person has just finished her exams and is planning to go to college for next year. One young person is yet to fully engage with their education.

Young people are able to take part in a range of activities, but currently they are not taking up the activities on offer. The planning for activities is not always well thought through in advance. The manager is currently reviewing what is on offer and including young people's ideas.

Young people's friends are made welcome at the home. Staff recognise that this is an important part of the children's home being a real home for the young people.

New young people are welcomed into the home. A comprehensive impact risk assessment is completed prior to the young person's arrival taking account of their needs and vulnerabilities as well as those of existing residents.

Healthcare provision is good. Staff provide young people with good information, support and guidance around staying healthy and well. This approach will help young people to manage their own healthcare needs into adulthood.

Specialist help is provided for young people where a need is identified. The staff work

with drug advisers, mental health professionals and mentors. Staff support young people to access these services and work collaboratively with professionals from outside of the home, to support the work that they are undertaking with the young people.

The staff team helps young people to stay in contact with their families. This can involve long journeys. While on home visits, staff keep in touch with families and young people to ensure that everything is alright. The frequency of this contact is determined by the young people.

The home provides the young people with a comfortable, spacious and well-furnished environment in which to live and thrive. Young people are involved in the creation of this environment. Any damage is quickly repaired. This shows young people that staff are concerned about making a comfortable home for them.

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

Young people feel safe in the home. Despite the number of different members of staff who care for them, young people have staff that they would talk to if they had any concerns.

Safeguarding procedures at the home are good. Staff spoken with demonstrate a comprehensive working knowledge of child protection processes. They clearly understand their responsibilities and duty of care. Records of safeguarding matters are detailed and demonstrate good safeguarding practices. Staff have a good relationship with the designated officer.

Two of the young people living at the home have made very good progress in reducing their risk-taking behaviours. For one young person, this work is ongoing. Staff work with young people to develop their insight and understanding of the impact that their behaviours may have on those around them. As a result, young people learn to develop self-awareness and are better able to manage their own behaviours.

Comprehensive risk assessments are in place for each young person. These are kept under review and amended when required and in light of events or incidents. These are linked to young people's plans and have input from social workers and young people where possible.

Going missing from home incidents are well managed by the team. This work has led to a significant reduction of these events for some young people. With others, work to help young people to stop going missing is ongoing and the level of concern is rising. However, staff work well with social workers, the police, youth offending teams and safeguarding teams to ensure that all that can be done to have the young person return home safely is being done. Return interviews are consistently carried out.

Restraint is used only as a last resort. Restraint incidents are suitably recorded. However, there is a lack of detailed analysis of the effectiveness of the restraint. This limits the ability of the team to fully understand the precursors and to prevent restraint

being used in the future. There has been one occasion where the debrief after a restraint was carried out by the member of staff who was involved in the incident. This is not appropriate.

The sanction system has been reviewed. It was punitive, with a number of financial fines being imposed. Now, sanctions are more restorative which enables young people to understand how their behaviours affect themselves and others.

There is an effective recruitment process in place. This protects young people from those who may wish to harm them.

Staff provide young people with a safe environment in which to live and thrive. Environmental risk assessments are current.

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

The home has had three different managers since the last full inspection on 12 July 2016. The current manager started work at the beginning of April 2017. During this time, they have made some improvements and have a good understanding of the strengths and areas of improvement required. They have plans in place to address these.

At the interim inspection, one requirement and one recommendation were made. These have not been fully met so are restated at this inspection. The requirement related to staff vacancies. Three new members of staff have been recruited and are working at the home. A further three members of staff have been recruited but have yet to commence work. The recommendation related to the debrief that young people received after they have been restrained. This has improved with only one debrief being undertaken by a member of staff not involved in the restraint. This recommendation is restated at this inspection.

Since the last inspection on 16 November 2016, the whole staff team has changed. As previously stated, there are still staff vacancies. To cover these the managers have been using sessional staff, staff from other homes within the organisation and agency staff. This approach does not provide young people with the consistency that they require. Young people said that they do not like it when there are different people caring for them. In addition, this has led to staff still on their probation being left in sole charge of the home on occasions. Staff said that it has been difficult on occasions due to the number of different members of staff as they do not know the young people well.

The home's statement of purpose was last reviewed in December 2016. Since then, the staff team has completely changed. The statement of purpose has not been updated to reflect this.

Reports from the independent visitor have not been routinely sent to Ofsted.

The home's records vary in quality. A small number lack detail of actions that staff have

taken in light of incidents or events and strategies that they used to prevent reoccurrence. This has been highlighted by the manager and records have improved, but more work is required.

Monitoring systems are in place, but these were not effectively used by the previous manager. The current manager is monitoring effectively and has already highlighted some of the points raised in this report. They are addressing these with the staff team. Staff are now receiving good-quality supervision from the manager. These sessions enable staff to reflect on and develop their practice. There are gaps in the supervision records from the previous manager.

Regular team meetings are held. At these, staff review the young people, discuss incidents and review and develop young people's plans.

The staff team receives good-quality training. All staff spoken to praised the organisation for the training provision and they felt that this prepared them well for their role.

Young people's plans are of a very good standard. They provide staff with clear information and strategies on how young people's needs will be met.

The staff team works very effectively with other professionals. Those contacted during the inspection praised the team for their communication skills and their commitment to the young people. The team will effectively challenge placing authorities where needed. This includes calling strategy meetings where they have concerns about a young person.

Notification of significant events is completed in a timely manner. They provide detailed information about incidents and action taken by staff.

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: SC407430

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Wessex College

Registered provider address: Ward Goodman, 4 Cedar Park, Cobham Road,
Ferndown Industrial Estate, Wimborne BH21 7SF

Responsible individual: Selina Wall

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector(s)

Wendy Anderson: social care inspector

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