

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	17/11/2016
Unique reference number	SC407430
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Wessex College Limited
Registered provider address	Wessex College Limited, 4 Cedar Park, Cobham Road, Ferndown Industrial Estate, Wimborne BH21 7SF

Responsible individual	Selina Wall
Registered manager	Anita Howard
Inspector	Wendy Anderson

Inspection date	16/11/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection. This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. The two requirements and two recommendations that were made at the previous inspection have been met. Staff have received a care plan for all young people living at the home. Records of restraints have improved. Staff no longer use vague language to describe the behaviours which lead to restraint. In addition, these records now clearly document if injuries were sustained during the restraint and what medical attention was required and provided. Restraint is only used as a last resort to keep young people safe. However, when restraint is used there are some incidents where the debriefing discussion with the young person is carried out by the same adult involved in the restraint. This approach does not allow for sufficient independent oversight. Staff personnel records now contain an explanation of the scoring system used during interviews of new staff, and whether they were appointed. The quality of key worker records has improved and now includes more detail of the discussions that staff have with the young people. The registered manager was not present at this inspection. The home is currently being managed by an acting manager who is experienced in residential childcare, and appropriately qualified for the role. Since the previous inspection, there have been changes within the staff team. Four members of staff have left, some to work in other homes within the organisation. Recruitment is underway to fill these vacancies. This has meant that in order to ensure staffing levels are maintained to meet the needs of the young people, temporary and sessional staff have been used. Currently, this provision has not affected the young people, but potentially could do so if this issue is not resolved. During the summer holidays, there were a number of missing person events and some of these were for significant periods of time. The staff have developed personalised strategies for young people, which are adhered to in practice. This includes staff following young people for as long as possible to ensure their safety and to try and persuade them to return to the home. Staff work very well with other professionals involved in this work, including sharing intelligence that they have gathered about where young people go and who with. The number of these events has dramatically reduced since the end of September 2016.	

Young people continue to make progress from their starting points. This includes addressing risk-taking behaviours such as going missing from home, substance misuse and around child sexual exploitation. Staff help young people to understand the risks of these behaviours and together they create self-management techniques, which will help young people when they leave the home.

Young people are supported by staff to maintain contact with their families and other people who are important to them. Staff liaise well with social workers and families to determine how this contact is arranged and the support required. All young people are engaged in some form of education. Some have personalised timetables that are helping them to progress towards full-time education. One young person successfully completed their exams recently. They were very nervous, but with staff support they did well. Another young person is being supported with a work experience contract.

Staff have good relationships with the young people. They treat them with respect and value their views and ideas. Young people are involved in planning their care as far as possible. Staff review their working strategies with young people to evaluate how effective they are, and use this information to improve practices and approaches.

Staff spoken to during the inspection demonstrated a very good understanding of the young people's needs and how these are to be met. Staff have the young people's best interests at the heart of their work.

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for four young people, irrespective of gender, with 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, which young people from this home can attend.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/07/2016	Full	Good
22/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/08/2015	Full	Good
07/01/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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
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))	31/01/2017

Recommendations

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

- 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', page 49 and 50, paragraph 9.60)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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