

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	22/02/2016
Unique reference number	SC407430
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Wessex College Limited
Registered person address	4 Cedar Park, Cobham Road, Ferndown Industrial Estate, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 7SF

Responsible individual	Joanne Sams
Registered manager	Anita Howard
Inspector	Clare Davies

Inspection date	22/02/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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 full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has sustained effectiveness. Young people continue to receive good quality care. The manager has strengthened the staff team, with permanent appointments, ensuring greater consistency of staffing. There are no changes to the residential group of young people, however, there are transitional plans for alternative placements and these impending moves are having some negative impact on the stability of the home. During the previous two years, some young people have experienced a significant part of their growing up in this children's home. Placement stability provides a safe place to be and support in young people's personal development and progress. As care plans are followed and young people consider leaving this home, the strengths of this placement are tested. For example, there has been an increase in damage to the home over the last two months and an escalation in challenging behaviour. Staff support the emotional turmoil of young people as they struggle to manage their anxieties. Young people are receiving individual support in managing the relationships with their families and for some, with moving on from this home. Additional support is available for the emotional wellbeing of young people through collaboration with an in-house clinical team. Young people benefit from direct access to psychological and psychiatric support and intervention, avoiding the need to wait for community health services. The manager monitors the effectiveness of care practices and has, on occasions, amended the system for sanctions as a consequence to disruptive behaviour. For example the loss of some pocket money is not always effective and therefore changes are made that have greater impact. The manager is developing a more restorative approach to negative behaviour such as letters of apology, cleaning up any mess made and helping to repair, or replace, damaged items. This good practice is not always applied and requires wider adoption from the whole team. The reward system to develop a positive approach to behaviour management is under regular review in consultation with young people.	

Young people have identified themselves that there has been recent damage in the home and as a result, a young person called a house meeting to discuss further. Young people expressed annoyance that they don't like their home damaged and that more care is required not to waste toiletries in the bathroom. This level of consultation is excellent, enabling young people to raise issues and solve them amongst themselves.

Most young people maintain steady attendance at the school provided by the organisation. Alternative educational programmes are delivered by tutors, supporting young people who find it difficult to engage with formal learning. Vocational skills are taught with a current project being the redecoration of the dining room. This contribution by a young person enhances the environment while developing their skills in home decoration and design.

Young people take part in very few activities outside of the home, their hobbies and interests throughout the winter months have been minimal. Young people say they enjoyed the half-term trip on quad bikes however, they would benefit from an activity that can be sustainable each week in the community, or by pursuing an individual interest. Young people need opportunities to develop friendships outside of the home, particularly as they also attend education within the same peer group.

The manager and the wider organisation strive for continuous improvement and welcome working with other agencies and professionals to achieve the best outcomes for young people. Safeguarding incidents and concerns are promptly reported to the local authorities involved. Monthly meetings with the police and safeguarding officers ensure a collaborative approach to the safety and protection of young people. A young person has contributed to the work of a charity for missing people to assist in their promotional material to prevent young people placing themselves at risk.

The manager has responded well to the one requirement and two recommendations from the previous inspection. Consultation with young people is a regular feature through formal house meetings and informal chats with the manager and staff. The kitchen fridge is suitably stocked for young people to make a snack. Young people say that they are disappointed with the recent changes of not having chicken nuggets on the menu. However, staff offer to make similar chicken meals to avoid using such processed food.

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for four young people of either sex, with emotional and behavioural difficulties it is one of four children's homes operated by a private organisation. The organisation provides an independent school where young people from this home can attend.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/08/2015	Full	Good
07/01/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
02/07/2014	Full	Good
20/01/2014	Interim	Satisfactory Progress

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

Recommendations

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

- Children's homes staff should seek to identify and provide appropriate opportunities for children to develop themselves in accordance with their wishes and feelings and as part of the home's plan for their care. Each child's talents and interests should be understood and nurtured, with children selecting activities based on their personal preferences and abilities, so far as is reasonable. Staff should also support children to try activities that are new for them, where appropriate. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 31 paragraph 6.4)
- Any sanctions used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 46 paragraph 9.38)

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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