

SC486167

Registered provider: South West Childcare Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for one child or young person who may have some emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 1 October 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 9 July 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: Inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/07/2018	Full	Inadequate
28/09/2017	Full	Good
15/09/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/04/2016	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
5: Engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; and seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs. In particular, this is in relation to arrangements being made for children who go missing to have an independent return home interview on their return. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)(d))	21/10/2018
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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. In particular, this is especially important when there is only one member of staff on duty. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(c))	21/10/2018

Recommendations

- Ensure that the local authority provides opportunity for children and young people to have independent return home interviews when they have been missing. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child.

Records must be kept detailing all individual incidents when children go missing from the home. This information should be shared with the placing authority and, where appropriate, with the child's parents. Evaluation of missing incidents should be undertaken to identify any gaps in training, skills or knowledge for staff to record and retain evidence of what worked well. This evaluation should inform the review of the quality of care.

Where a child runs away persistently or engages in other risky behaviours, such as frequently being absent from the home to meet with inappropriate adults, the registered person, in consultation with the child's placing authority, should convene a risk management meeting to develop a strategy for managing risks to the child.

Children missing from home agreed protocols with local authorities should be reviewed regularly and be scrutinised by the local safeguarding children's board (LSCB) when the above is not happening. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraphs 9.23–9.32)

Inspection judgements

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

This full inspection was carried out following an Inadequate judgement in July 2018. At the time, there were serious concerns around the inappropriate admission of a child and the inability of the manager and staff to keep the child safe. A monitoring visit was also undertaken in August 2018.

Since then, the child has been discharged from the home. Leaders and managers have learned lessons from the poor practices and outcomes for this child and improvements have been made. It is now imperative that such improvements are embedded to help children to make good progress and have positive experiences as a result of living in this home.

A new child has been admitted to the home. Leaders and managers have been more thorough in their assessment of need and whether they could safely and effectively care for the child. Good consideration has also been given to helping the child prepare positively to moving in, for example by meeting the staff and visiting the home beforehand and personalising their bedroom. The child is receiving individualised care and support and good-quality relationships are being established between her and the small staff team. The child told the inspector that she feels 'happy' and 'safe' living in

this home.

Staff are listening to the child and advocating for her, but also sourcing an independent advocate. A detailed placement plan is in place, and the child has been involved in creating other relevant records that help staff to understand her needs and care for her more effectively. Education is being well supported.

Good attention has been given to the physical environment, which now feels welcoming and homely.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Arrangements for children who go missing from this home to receive an independent return home interview when they return are still not in place, despite this being raised at the full inspection in July and a subsequent monitoring visit in August. This means that children do not have the opportunity to speak to someone who is completely independent from the home about their reasons for going missing. It also means that there are lost opportunities to share intelligence and for professionals to work together effectively to help children to become increasingly safe.

During the inspection, the registered manager emailed the placing authority about this issue and the inspector was told that a meeting has been scheduled to resolve this ongoing shortfall.

Following the discharge of the previous child, leaders, managers and staff have reflected on their safeguarding practices. Additional training has been provided and recording and reporting procedures reviewed to ensure that all concerns are acted upon and shared appropriately.

The current child is benefiting from clear and consistent boundaries, which is contributing to her sense of well-being and security. Rewards and incentives are in place, which are working well. There have been no serious incidents.

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

The provision of experienced and suitably qualified staff remains a shortfall that requires improvement to be good.

While the stability and consistency of staff has improved since the last full inspection, too many of the staff lack experience in residential childcare and do not hold a level 3 qualification. This is especially relevant, as the staffing arrangements at the home have recently been reviewed to provide just one member of staff on duty throughout the day and night. Some staff do have experience of working with children in different settings and have achieved degree-level qualifications and have been enrolled on the level 3 diploma for residential childcare.

The registered manager is currently working on her level 5 diploma in leadership and management for residential childcare, which she is due to complete well within expected timescales.

Regular team meetings are taking place, along with practice-related individual supervisions. Good opportunities have been taken to reflect on lessons learned and how the team can achieve better outcomes for children. The manager feels confident in her team and feels that the team members have been strengthened by their experiences.

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: SC486167

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: South West Childcare Services

Registered provider address: 46 Durnford Street, First Floor Flat, Plymouth, Devon PL1 3QN

Responsible individual: Angela Glynn

Registered manager: Lauren Young

Inspector

Norma Welsby, social care inspector

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