

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC038719
<b>Inspector</b>	Shaun Common
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Secure Unit

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<b>Registered person</b>	Hampshire County Council
<b>Registered person address</b>	Hampshire County Council The Castle WINCHESTER Hampshire SO23 8ZB
<b>Responsible individual</b>	Susan Lomax
<b>Registered manager</b>	John Arthur George Stacey
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	23/06/2014

<b>Inspection date</b>	10/12/2014
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Previous inspection	improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>good</b>
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good
Outcomes in education and related learning activities	good

## Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	<b>good</b>
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Good assessment and care planning processes ensure that young people's needs are met and positive outcomes are achieved. Young people are consulted about their care and the running of the home. There is good health service access and education provision meaning young people make good progress and are supported to achieve their potential. Young people are supported to develop positive behaviour.

Contact with family is promoted and supported. Young people are able to stay in touch with people important to them. Young people make a positive contribution to their community and are prepared well for the transition to their next placement or return to the community.

Staff and managers are committed to delivering a quality service for young people. There are clear policies and procedures that are reviewed and implemented to help safeguard young people. Strong links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and independent scrutiny by external manager's help to improve practices at the home. However, visits by regulation 33 visitors are not as robust as they could

be.

There are positive relationships between staff and young people. Young people feel safe and well cared for. Staff are qualified or undertaking a qualification and receive very good formal support. The home continues to use casual and agency staff, though the manager has plans in place to develop the provision of consistent and permanent staffing.

Other areas for improvement have been identified at this inspection. These include: robust recording of complaints; evidence the use of restorative practices; improving the décor and furnishings; recording the action taken regarding searches; staff of the same gender searching young people's rooms and staff undertaking training in fire safety and, equality and diversity.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This secure children's home is managed by a local authority. It is approved by the Department for Education to restrict young people's liberty. As well as the living accommodation, education is provided on site in dedicated facilities.

The children's home can accommodate up to 16 young people, who are aged between 10 and 17 years. Up to four young people who have received a custodial sentence can be placed at this home by the Youth Justice Board. Other young people are the subject of Section 25 of The Children Act 1989 and placed by local authorities. Admission of any young person under section 25 of The Children Act 1989 who is over the age of 10 but under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/06/2014	Interim	improved effectiveness
19/03/2014	Full	adequate
22/01/2014	Full	inadequate
31/07/2013	Full	adequate

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

#### 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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
24 (2001)	ensure that a written record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of the investigation (Regulation 24 (5))	31/01/2015
33	ensure visits carried out form an opinion as to	31/03/2015

(2001)	whether the conduct of the children's home promotes the wellbeing of the children and children are effectively safeguarded; specifically, robustly assess, evaluate and report on the matters set out in regulation, NMS and statutory guidance. (Regulation 33(8))	
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## Recommendations

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

- ensure that consideration is given to, and evidence provided of, staff using sanctions that are restorative in nature so that children are helped to recognise the impact of their behaviour on others (Volume 5, Statutory Guidance, paragraph 2.89)
- ensure the home carries out searches of a child's room in accordance with the home's guidance; specifically, ensure records of searches show the action taken when any restricted or prohibited item is found (NMS 3.20)
- provide a comfortable and homely environment that is well maintained and decorated; specifically, ensure the plans for new furnishings and décor are implemented in a timely manner (NMS 10.3)
- ensure there is a good quality and learning development programme which staff are supported to undertake; specifically, ensure all staff undertake equality and diversity, and fire safety training (NMS 18.1)
- ensure the secure children's home has clear and appropriate practice; specifically, that staff of the same gender as the young person search their bedrooms (NMS 23.3)
- ensure children are provided with appropriate education while in the home; specifically, develop opportunities for vocational training linked to work experience to better prepare young people for progression (NMS 23.11)
- ensure children are provided with appropriate education while in the home; specifically, further analyse the existing data to provide a better evaluation of overall achievement (NMS 23.11)
- ensure children are provided with appropriate education while in the home; specifically, refurbish the training kitchen to provide a better learning environment (NMS 23.11)
- ensure children are provided with appropriate education while in the home; specifically, provide more access to careers advice and guidance. (NMS 23.11)



## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people enjoy good health outcomes. They maintain or improve levels of fitness because they take regular exercise. They also benefit from a healthy and balanced diet. Where young people are admitted to the home having a history of alcohol or substance misuse they are supported to develop coping strategies which reduce the likelihood that damaging behaviours will resume in the future. The stability of the secure environment also enables young people to receive health advice and guidance in a range of areas such as sexual health, relationships, personal hygiene and nutrition. Consequently, they learn to take responsibility for their own health. Young people who have not previously received childhood inoculations are able to receive these during their time at the home. This means that their long-term health and well-being is much improved.

Most young people have better mental and emotional health as a result of their placement in the home. As they build trusting relationships with staff, they become more emotionally resilient. By providing young people with unconditional positive regard, staff help them to grow in self-esteem and feel valued. This approach supports young people to manage the impact of previous negative life experiences. As a result of experiencing educational success, young people grow in self-confidence. Where it is assessed that improved mental health can only be achieved in specialist hospital provision, the home does all it can to facilitate a smooth transition by working closely with relevant professionals and agencies.

Transition arrangements are strong and effective. Staff engage constructively with placing authorities to ensure that discharge planning begins from the point of admission. Managers regularly review these plans. They make sure that they are understood and agreed by young people. When appropriate, young people spend authorised time in the community as part of their preparation for discharge. Time away from the home is carefully planned to ensure that all potential risks are minimised and that young people are suitably monitored. Young people also benefit from spending time at their future placements prior to formal discharge. This enables the home to share information that supports continuing positive outcomes. Well-structured transition arrangements help young people to feel less anxious about the future and adapt well to their changed circumstances.

Young people make a positive contribution to their community. By participating in charitable fundraising activity they help to improve the lives of others. For example, young people participate in fund raising coffee mornings, bake cakes for a local elderly care home and make bird boxes for a local nature reserve. They learn to take pride in their ability to help others and develop an improved sense of social responsibility. Some young people have also completed the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. In doing so, they have developed new skills. The self-worth and confidence of

young people is greatly improved by participation in these enriching activities.

Family contact arrangements are very well supported by the home. Staff have a clear understanding of the agreed contact arrangements of each young person and adhere to them fully. Positive family contact is also promoted by young people having access to a phone on which to make private calls at all reasonable times. Staff also make allowance for special family circumstances. Young people are able to celebrate birthdays and other special occasions with their families because the home is very flexible in its approach to visits.

### **Quality of care**

**good**

Staff interact with young people in a consistently empathetic and sensitive manner. Their nurturing approach means that young people often engage with them in a warm and affectionate manner. Stable and trusting relationships are formed. These relationships underpin the routines of the home. Staff are skilled in the management of complex behaviours. A social worker stated that, 'Young people engage very well with staff.' The home's underpinning philosophy is generally well understood and implemented by staff. This means that they are becoming increasingly consistent in the way that they support young people. Staff report that the home's model of care helps them to focus positively on the care needs of young people rather than their presenting behaviours.

Care planning is of a good standard. This means that the complex needs of each young person are identified promptly and well understood by all staff. Improvements to the frequency and quality of key worker sessions mean that the home is better able to demonstrate that care planning objectives are met. The views of young people are actively sought through formal and informal consultation processes. As a result, young people have influence over their care plans. Effective consultation also ensures that young people have an active voice in the running of the home. Staff are highly committed to principles of equality and diversity. Needs that stem from the culture, religion or background of young people are positively addressed in care plans. The home is good at celebrating diversity. For example, staff and managers go to great lengths to enable religious ceremonies to take place within the home.

Young people know how to make a complaint and are confident to raise concerns about the quality of care they receive. Staff are careful to ensure that young people also have access to a range of external safeguarding, advocacy and regulatory bodies should they be unhappy about the way their complaint is dealt with. Managers investigate all complaints promptly. Young people are always informed of the outcome of their complaint. This demonstrates that complaints are taken seriously. However, recording of the investigation and outcome of complaints is sometimes poor. This limits the ability of the home to demonstrate that complaints are investigated robustly.



Health care arrangements are strong. A well-resourced multidisciplinary team provides a comprehensive range of health care services to young people. A weekly multi-disciplinary review of each young person's health takes place. Education and care staff contribute to this review and a holistic approach is taken. Very effective health care strategies are developed that impact positively on educational achievement and behaviour. Staff work well with young people who are fearful of some treatments. This has particularly impacted on the dental health of young people. Medication administration systems are safe and effective. Where potential improvements are identified, medication procedures are quickly updated.

The decoration and general presentation of living areas is more sterile than staff or young people would like. This is because it reflects safety priorities linked to the mental health needs of some young people. Additionally, some furnishings are looking worn and some have damage. However, plans are in place to improve the presentation of the home generally and so that risk management does not lead to an institutional feel.

Young people enjoy a good range of purposeful and fun leisure activity. They report that they enjoy craft activities such as painting, playing sports, using fitness equipment and playing games consoles. Young people generally use their time constructively and therefore boredom is reduced. This improves the well-being of young people and reduces incidents of challenging behaviour.

### **Keeping children and young people safe    good**

Young people said they feel safe at the home and they did not raise any concerns about bullying. A recent survey conducted by staff with young people also showed that young people feel safe and there has been no bullying. The home has a bullying policy that sets out how any concerns will be addressed.

Safety and security matters at the home have improved. Managers carry out regular security checks and audits in order to ensure that the home's environment is appropriately safe for the young people and conducive to their care.

Needs and any vulnerability are assessed when young people are admitted to the home. Any concerns are identified and a risk assessment devised and shared with all staff. Staff are aware of the needs of young people and implement risk assessments in order to help keep young people safe. Reviews take place regularly of any assessments and these are updated with any new and relevant information. The home has installed a new monitoring system that supports night staff to electronically record observations of young people in line with their risk assessments. Managers monitor this information to ensure practice supports the safeguarding and care of young people.

The home has a well-established incentive scheme that is understood by young

people. The scheme encourages young people to develop positive social skills and behaviour through increased rewards and benefits as young people progress through the scheme. The introduction of reward books further highlights efforts being made by staff to promote positive behaviour.

Where negative behaviour is exhibited by young people, sanctions are used by staff. Records are kept of all sanctions imposed and young people are able to see these records, sign them and make comments if they wish. This promotes young people's rights and encourages them to take responsibility. There are gaps in recording the effectiveness of measures imposed. The Registered Manager has identified these and at the time of the inspection was taking action to rectify these omissions. Sanctions used are appropriate to the misdemeanour and managers monitor effectiveness to ensure measures imposed are having a positive impact. Restorative practices are used; however they are not evidenced in the home's records to show that young people are encouraged to make good what they have done wrong.

The home has policies and procedures regarding the searching of young people, their rooms and communal areas in order to promote safety, security and wellbeing. Individual searches of young people involve a pat down and use of an electronic wand and are always carried out by staff of the same gender. Searches of communal areas and bedrooms are carried out regularly. Records are kept of all searches that take place showing anything that was found. However, actions taken as a result of anything found and therefore improvements made to processes and procedures is not recorded. Staff do not always carry out searches of bedrooms of young people of the same gender. There have been no concerns raised by young people about this matter; however it is not best practice.

The home has a policy regarding the use of single separation. This is commensurate with government guidance in that young people are only placed in single separation when there is a risk to them, others, or there is significant damage to property. Records kept by the home are clear, robust and monitored by managers. They show that the use of single separation is justified, appropriate and that young people are closely monitored when locked in their rooms in line with their risk assessments.

Physical intervention is used in line with the home's policy. Staff are trained in the home's techniques and the Registered Manager has confirmed that no pain compliance methods are used during restraints or in any breakaway techniques that staff are trained in. Each incident is followed up with detailed recording. Managers review all records and closed circuit television (CCTV) to ensure practice is appropriate. Young people are able to see records of any incidents and add their comments. Young people are always offered support through a debriefing session and always asked if they wish to see a medical professional. Managers also debrief staff involved in physical restraint incidents.

A child protection procedure is in place. Staff have undertaken child protection training and understand the procedure to follow should they have any concerns or

suspicious a young person is at risk of harm. There has been one child protection concern at the home since the last inspection. The matter was dealt with promptly and referred to the relevant agencies. The record kept of the incident clearly shows the process followed, action taken and that the home's procedures have been implemented to help keep young people safe.

The home continues to have strong links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). One of the assistant managers is a member of the Board's multi-agency safeguarding forum, working to improve safeguards to young people in the area. The Registered Manager meets with Board members who provide professional challenge about the home's safeguarding practices in matters such as physical restraint and self-harm. External managers also meet with the Registered Manager and carry out a similar process and examine the home's practices. This external and independent scrutiny provides the home with an additional quality assurance function that helps to improve practices and provides reassurance about the safeguarding of young people.

There have been no incidents of absconding since the last inspection. The home has a procedure and protocol with the local police that supports staff to help keep young people safe should there be any incidents.

There has been no new staff recruited since the last inspection. An individual has been seconded to the post of assistant manager from another role within the local authority. Records kept by the home demonstrate there is clear process and procedure for the vetting, recruitment and selection of new employees. This helps to ensure that the right people are employed to work with vulnerable children.

## **Leadership and management**

**good**

Staff and managers show a clear commitment to improving the quality of care and outcomes for young people. The manager took up post in April 2014 and was registered with Ofsted in May 2014. He is experienced and qualified. The Registered Manager's leadership along with the support of external line managers has demonstrated notable improvements in practice and policy, and in implementation of procedures.

The Statement of Purpose was reviewed and updated in May 2014 and sets out clearly the services provided and the aims and objectives of the home. The document provides good information for placing authorities and parents. A children's guide is also available that provides good information for young people about the home, what it is like, rules and routines and what to expect. Both the Statement of Purpose and children's guide can be translated into different languages for young people and parents whose first language is not English.

Most staff are qualified and the remainder are either undertaking a qualification or about to start a relevant course. Staff receive regular training to support them in

their role. Training includes matters such as physical intervention, first aid and child protection. Fire safety training for some staff has not been carried out; however the home have regular fire drills and instruction that include young people so the impact of this is limited. Not all staff have had training on equality and diversity matters.

Staff are well supported and receive formal supervision regularly from their line manager. Records are kept of all supervision sessions. The Registered Manager keeps a tracking system that enables monitoring of the delivery of supervision. Staff members feel that formal supervision is good and one staff member stated, 'Managers provide amazing support.' Generally, staff feel that managers are approachable at any time for advice and guidance and feel the home and practice has improved and is moving in a positive direction. A social worker stated that staff are, 'very, very good.'

There are a suitable number of staff on duty at all times to meet the needs of the young people. Although consistency on some shifts is sometimes difficult for managers to achieve due to a number of staff being absent from work, managers are working hard to achieve this. Agency staff are being used to support permanent staff teams and managers are aware of the issues this presents with consistency in practices. The impact of temporary staffing is limited and the Registered Manager has a plan in place to address this matter with the support of external line managers.

External monitoring of the home is adequate. Monthly visits take place by an independent person under regulation 33. Reports of visits cover a range of matters and identify strengths, though areas for improvement are not always clearly indicated through recommendations. Some matters are not reflected in reports consistently. For example, parents are not always consulted about their views of the care provided and single separation is not examined.

Internal monitoring of the home has improved and is good. The Registered Manager ensures that a range of matters are monitored closely and very regularly. This ensures shortfalls are identified and measures put in place to improve practice and the care provided to young people. The manager provides quarterly reports of this monitoring to Ofsted so there is external scrutiny and oversight.

The home has a development plan. This sets out clearly the areas for further improvement. On-going action and progress is recorded to show what is being achieved and the positive impact this has for young people's care and the operation of the home.

**Outcomes in education and related learning activities**

**good**

Initial assessment of English and maths takes place soon after young people arrive at the home and identifies the support needs required. The results are recorded on an individual education plan and are used well to individualise learning. Plans have appropriate targets that include both academic and personal development. The education staff are proactive in contacting schools and the local authority to access information on what learning and assessments young people have previously undertaken.

Outcomes for young people are good with most achieving their learning aim. Young people engage well with their learning and make good progress in relation to their starting point. In reading and comprehension, young people improve their reading age by around four months for every month spent at the home. Achievement of accredited qualifications for young people who stay at the centre long enough are good. Progress mapped to the national curriculum sub-levels indicates a clear improvement prior to release. The development of personal and social skills of young people are good. Young people achieve high standards in art. Their interest, commitment, and attention to detail enable them to make rapid and pleasing progress often beyond their own expectations. The quality of work within design and technology is excellent, requiring young people to use a range of tools and materials. Regular gym sessions play an important role in developing young people's fitness, co-ordination and team work.

Teaching, learning and assessment overall are good. Teachers assess well the individual needs of young people and challenge them to progress. In the best sessions, teachers provide thorough and succinct explanations to develop understanding. Planning for learning is informed by initial assessment to create individualised programmes but teachers are flexible and use their judgments well in adapting lessons and programmes to meet young people's needs. Teachers use discussion very well, to support learning effectively developing speaking and listening skills. Written work is marked swiftly with good comments from teachers to help young people progress.

In some lessons, skills developed by young people in English were not sufficiently re-enforced. Learning support assistants and teaching staff work effectively as a team and communication is good.

Learning support assistants provide very effective individual support for young people, which in particular helps in, improving their English and mathematics. Young people who have additional needs or have complex barriers to learning receive excellent individual support. Observations take place of learning support assistants to ensure the quality of support provided.

Accommodation for learning is generally good. Classrooms are light spacious and well-resourced to support learning. Good use is made of wall space to celebrate young people's work and help create a positive learning environment. The range of books to support learning and promote literacy are good. The food technology

kitchen is small and in need of refurbishment.

Tutorials provide constructive support for young people in developing their learning and personal skills targets. Young people willingly participate in a weekly review of their academic progress, behaviour and attendance and are open to challenge from their tutors where they fall below expectations. Teachers and learning support assistants provide tutors with regular updates on young people's progress. These, combined with a simple but effective self-assessment, enable young people to chart their progress and areas for improvement. Target setting for young people takes place daily with their individual tutors; objectives are negotiated both for the qualification and for personal development.

Weekly assemblies provide an opportunity for young people and staff to celebrate success. Small but important steps in young people's social and educational progress are highlighted with staff being sensitive to the needs of those young people who are less comfortable with public acknowledgment.

The curriculum is generally broadly balanced and provides opportunities to study English, mathematics, science, information communication technology, art, design technology, physical education, food technology and humanities. A strong focus is on helping young people develop their English and mathematics. Courses to help develop young people's well-being and improve their confidence and self-esteem are in place. Insufficient opportunities are available for young people to take part in vocational training.

Enrichment activities, which take place during non-term time, provide very good opportunities for young people to engage in a range of leisure activities that they enjoy and extend their knowledge and understanding. External links with a variety of providers is very effectively utilised to broaden the range of activities available. A good focus of activities is on developing an understanding of healthy living. Young people have good opportunities to take part in charity events at the home and play an active role in fund raising for a variety of causes.

Mobility is used well to enable young people to attend college interviews but is not used sufficiently for work experience or vocational taster days. Opportunities for young people to experience work experience within the unit is insufficient. Access to career advice for young people provided through a link with the local college, is not sufficiently well planned and too infrequent. Teachers provide informal career advice on progression routes and help young people consider their longer term objectives on release.

Standards of behaviour were generally good. Education staff are skilled at de-escalating inappropriate behaviour. Rarely are young people removed from class and where this happens it is managed well by the learning support assistants, who ensured young people are speedily returned to learning. On the few occasions where young people refuse to attend education, effective planning ensures that

they quickly return. Attendance at education is good being well monitored and managed.

The leadership and management of education are good. Tracking and monitoring of learning on an individual basis is used well to judge progress. Quality assurance processes such as the observation of teaching learning and assessment focus on continual improvement. Good links have been made with local schools which has resulted in teams visiting the home to take part in competitive football and volley ball and badminton. Local schools have also taken part in a Shakespeare day ran by the home. The implementation of a rewards system in education has had a positive impact on improving young people's behaviour. Education provides details reports for final reviews and provides a high level of detailed information to support transition on release. The involvement of young people in helping inform the planning of education and learning is good and has had a positive effect on implementing actions for improvement. For example, young people have influenced the introduction of a school uniform and the introduction of the rewards scheme. Staff qualifications are appropriate and good use is made of their wider skills.

## What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

## Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.

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