

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC032163
Inspector	Jennifer Reed
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Dorset County Council
Registered person address	County Hall Colliton Park DORCHESTER Dorset DT1 1XJ
Responsible individual	Vacant
Registered manager	James Patrick Collins
Date of last inspection	25/11/2014

Inspection date	16/02/2015
------------------------	------------

Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

The home has satisfactorily met the two requirements and the one best practice recommendation made at the previous inspection.

A new independent person has been appointed by the local authority, to carry out the home's monthly monitoring visit to report upon the quality of care provided to young people. The independent person made their first visit to the home on 19 January 2015 to meet with the Registered Manager and to inspect the home; this was an announced visit. However, the independent person plans to undertake future monthly visits on an unannounced basis, to ensure that each visit reflects the daily running of the home and no preparation has been made in anticipation of their arrival. Such arrangements will contribute to providing a more accurate view of the home's operation.

The independent person spoke with young people and with members of the staff team to gain their views and opinions about the quality of care provided by the home. They also obtained the contact details for parents, carers and social workers to enable them to speak with these persons on future visits to gain a rounded view of the quality of care young people receive. The independent person's first report is a comprehensive document. It identifies areas of strengths and weakness within the home's operation and makes recommendations for improvement in practice to benefit outcomes for young people. This robust, external scrutiny of the home contributes to safeguarding the health and welfare of young people.

The home has improved its recruitment and selection processes. Staff now demonstrate increased vigilance and accuracy in recording each step they take to verify and check applicant's references. Records now clearly show that all checks to vet the suitability of employees to look after vulnerable young people have been rigorously undertaken, contributing to protecting young people from the risk of

harm.

No admissions or discharges have been made since the previous inspection. Young people continue to be well cared for in accordance with their placement plans. Many young people are making good progress in their lives and achieving new skills and abilities. As they grow, young people are developing their independent living skills, their social and personal care abilities and their communication with others. The good support they receive helps them to spend valued time with their families and helps prepare each individual for a successful move into adult services or other settings.

The staff team excel at understanding the needs of the young people they look after and they demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring each young person receives the best care available. A strength of the home is the staff team's ability to recognise the changing needs of each young person and to acknowledge when the emerging needs of individuals can no longer be satisfactorily met by the home. When such circumstances arise, managers work collaboratively with parents and all agencies involved, to devise behaviour management strategies to keep young people safe while alternative, more suitable placements for the individual are found. This good practice contributes to ensuring young people's welfare and safety is promoted at all times.

Young people enjoy living in this home and spending time in the community. Their personal development benefits from their residence in a home that provides them with a high level of personal support and supervision, effective, individualised behaviour management strategies, risk assessments and detailed placement plans. These factors help to assure their safety and well-being while enabling them to participate in stimulating and enjoyable activities, both in and outside the home. Young people live in a pleasant, homely environment that is purposefully organised to meet their individual needs. They really enjoy eating the nutritious and tasty meals which cater for their individual tastes.

Staff continue to receive a good level of training to help them look after young people well. Recent training opportunities and reflective supervision sessions are helping staff to think more about how they look after young people and how they can become more effective in their care to improve outcomes for young people. Supervising staff have completed training to help them facilitate and deliver effective supervision to team members, to increase their awareness of the safeguarding of young people in all aspects of their care. This adds protection in young people's lives and promotes their well-being.

Leaders and managers work effectively with local schools, agencies and services to support young people. Staff attend school meetings and work collaboratively with school staff to help young people make successful transitions when changing school placements. Good collaborative working with health services results in young people receiving effective assessments and services to meet their identified needs.

Leaders and managers demonstrate their continuous striving for improvement in practice by their actions, resulting in improved outcomes for young people. For example, the continuing refurbishment and upgrading of the home's environment and equipment, clearer lines of delegated responsibility for all staff, the increased involvement of keyworkers in the development of practice, and a more focused approach to the management of the home. However, the Registered Manager's very child-focused monitoring reports do not fully capture how the review of the home's operation leads to these improvements in practice being undertaken. The quarterly management monitoring reports contain ample detail and clearly demonstrate the outstanding care young people receive. However, the report does not cover all points raised in the regulation, nor does it demonstrate a critical, reflective review of the home's operation, resulting in recommendations for improvements in practice.

Information about this children's home

This home is part of a range of services provided by a local authority. The home is currently registered to accommodate up to 9 children and young people who have complex learning difficulties and disabilities. The home provides long term placements, including shared care arrangements.

At the time of the inspection the home was providing care and accommodation for 6 children and young people. The four distinct units located within the home's premises operate to meet the differing needs of the accommodated children and young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/11/2014	Full	good
14/01/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
22/05/2013	Full	adequate
31/01/2013	Interim	inadequate progress

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
34 (2001)	establish and maintain a system for monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6 at least once in every three months; and improving the quality of care in the home. (Regulation 34 (1) (a) (b))	31/03/2015

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

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.