

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	24 May 2016
Unique reference number	SC038719
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Secure Unit
Registered provider	Hampshire County Council
Registered provider address	Hampshire County Council, The Castle, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8ZB

Responsible individual	Catherine Hadley
Registered manager	John Stacey
Inspector	Paul Scott

Inspection date	24 May 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
Outcomes in education and related learning activities	Good

SC038719

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people are benefitting from the care and support that they receive from staff. They enjoy warm, trusting and supportive relationships with adults who provide them with stability and opportunities to develop and progress.
- Young people's views are highly valued, and their participation in the running of the home is encouraged and promoted to an excellent standard.
- Young people confirm that they feel safe and well cared for. This is because staff give their care and safety the highest priority.
- Staff make every effort to help young people to understand their own behaviour and to help them to manage their individual risks and vulnerabilities more effectively. The effectiveness in this approach is evident in the better choices that young people make about their safety.
- The registered manager has a realistic understanding of the home's strengths, and there are clear plans in place to promote continuous growth and improvement at an appropriate rate.
- Young people benefit from the care and support of a diverse staff group, in terms of experience, qualifications, age, ethnicity and interests. This relatively new staff group delivers good levels of care in an enthusiastic and child-focused manner.
- Teaching and learning are good, and teachers engage well on a one-to-one basis with young people. Behaviour is managed well and young people mostly make good progress. Practical and vocational opportunities require further development to reflect the changing age profile of residents.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>12: The protection of children standard.</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard, in particular the standard in paragraph (1), the registered person must ensure</p> <p>(2)(a)(vi) that staff take effective action whenever there is a serious safeguarding concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>(2)(b) that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.</p> <p>This is with specific reference to ensuring that staff are rigorous in their implementation of the homes searching procedures and that any ensuing concerns are effectively managed.</p>	22 June 2016
<p>13: The leadership and management standard.</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard, in particular the standard in paragraph (1), the registered person must</p> <p>2)(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p> <p>This is with particular regards to ensuring that managers maintain rigorous oversight of all records, in particular behaviour management records, and that suitable action is taken to address identified recording shortfalls.</p>	22 June 2016
<p>The registered person must ensure that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. This is with specific reference to improving the home's systems for maintaining records of recruitment and ensuring that the manager can evidence that he has verified that all of the information required in respect of persons seeking to work at the children's home is in place</p>	22 June 2016

(Regulation 32(3)(d)).	
The registered person must ensure that records are kept of any allegation of abuse or neglect and the action taken in response. This is with specific reference to ensuring that the safeguarding records are fully complete and up to date, and that they confirm the agreed outcome (Regulation 34(2)(d)).	22 June 2016
The registered person must ensure that, following the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes all relevant details. This record should be sufficiently detailed to reflect staff practice accurately, including the actions taken to speak to the child about the measure and the learning that they have taken from this (Regulation 35(3)(a-c)).	22 June 2016
The registered person should ensure that the independent person, if they consent, interviews in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and person's working at the home, and that the independent person produces a report about the visit ('the independent person's report') which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether children are effectively safeguarded (Regulation 44(2)(a)(4)(a)).	22 June 2016

Recommendations

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

- Better evidence the actions that staff have taken to challenge the placing authority when it does not provide the input and services needed to meet a child's needs during their time in the home or in preparation for leaving the home ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8).
- Ensure that any sanctions used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature, to help children to recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, and the staff caring for them. Staff in the home should be skilled to support the child to understand this and to carry it out. This specifically relates to ensuring that sanction records are effectively monitored for appropriateness and effectiveness ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38).
- The registered person should review the format of the independent visitor's report to ensure that it is purposeful in helping the independent visitor to assess all relevant information, including behaviour management records; and they

should form an impartial judgement about the quality of the children's home's care ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.8).

- Ensure that the ethos of the home supports each child to learn; specifically, maximise the use of information technology (IT) to track learners' progress, to share information and to provide learning opportunities ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18).
- Ensure that the ethos of the home supports each child to learn; specifically, broaden the curriculum to provide more practical and vocational activities to reflect the changing age profile of residents ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18).
- Ensure that the ethos of the home supports each child to learn; specifically, ensure that all staff, including agency staff, consistently challenge the use of inappropriate language ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18).

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. 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 under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20 October 2015	Full	Good
10 December 2014	Full	Good
23 June 2014	Interim	Improved effectiveness
19 March 2014	Full	Adequate

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>Young people benefit from living in this home. Staff encourage them to reflect on the behaviour and the reasons they have needed to be placed in secure accommodation. This enables them to develop positive coping strategies, which provide good foundations for changing their lifestyles and help to reduce the risks to which they have been exposed.</p> <p>Staff and young people enjoy warm and trusting relationships with each other. Young people will readily seek out the reassurance and company of staff and interactions are respectful and supportive, while maintaining clear behavioural expectations and boundaries. Staff present as positive role models, providing young people with consistent levels of nurturing care. Feedback from young people about members of staff is overwhelmingly positive and included comments such as, 'They are sound', and 'They always listen and want to help.'</p> <p>Young people are confident in expressing their views. They know the avenues that they can use, should they wish to make a formal complaint, and are confident that their complaints are heard and addressed. The drive to promote young people's participation enables them to feel that they can have a genuine and meaningful influence on the running of the home. Examples of their views being acted on are changes in menus, purchase of additional activity equipment, activity planning and young people's involvement in the recruitment process. This embedded approach to valuing and promoting the young people's opinions and feelings is a strength.</p> <p>Young people receive excellent support from staff who consistently promote education. They benefit from living in a home where attendance in education is part of the established routine and daily expectations.</p> <p>Young people are able to take part in a good variety of activities. These include the gym, cooking, art, crafts, football and listening to music and playing on games consoles. Young people are also able to spend time together in the garden or lounge areas, socialising with each other at less structured times. In addition, where there are approved and agreed plans, young people are assisted to take part in enrichment activities in the community. These are carefully prepared at a rate with which each young person can cope and takes into account and mitigates any potential risks or vulnerabilities.</p> <p>Activities in the local area are purposefully used to help young people to prepare to move back into the community. Staff use these to help young people to test their newly established strategies and coping skills in preparation for leaving the home. Success on these outings increases their confidence and self-esteem and enables</p>	

them to build further trust with the adults who care for them. In addition, these activities ensure that the young people do not become isolated and that they know that their placement in secure accommodation is a part of a wider plan to help them in their journey back to life in their own communities.

Transition plans are developed with placing authorities and members of staff from identified future placements. Staff do their best to promote good exit planning from the point when a young person is admitted to the home. At times, this presents a challenge for staff who find it frustrating when placing authorities are slow to identify suitable placements for young people to move on to. There is evidence to confirm that staff consistently challenge this, but they do not maintain quality records of the actions that they have taken to advocate on young people's behalf.

There is very good health provision for the young people. They have prompt health assessments carried out by the home's nurse, and these swiftly identify any specific needs, that are then met. For example, immunisations are brought up to date, dental appointments made and specialist support from services such as sexual health and substance misuse professionals provided.

Managers are reviewing the way mental health support is delivered to young people. Services are being developed in-house through the appointment of a multi-skilled 'well-being team'. The team will be integrated into working on the units and will be led by a psychiatrist who is due to start at the end of May 2016. This has already led to higher levels of engagement by young people and will remove the need for referrals to external mental health agencies.

Each young person has a comprehensive care plan that identifies their individual needs and areas for development. Well-thought-out strategies and interventions are tailored to each young person in order for them to make progress. These include work on sexual exploitation and risk and anger management, for example. Key-work sessions with members of staff ensure that each young person has the opportunity to reflect on their progress, to review their own strategies and to celebrate their successes. This ensures that their individual plans are kept up to date and are meaningful.

The staff team is diverse in both age and cultural background. This provides young people with opportunities to learn about and develop understanding of and respect for people from different backgrounds. As a result, equality and diversity are promoted and celebrated to a very high standard.

Contact arrangements with families and friends are good. Specific strategies and close support are given to young people who may find this anxiety provoking or stressful. This ensures that the young people are able to maintain meaningful contact with those important to them, in a structured and reassuring environment.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
<p>Managers' oversight and monitoring of records relating to behaviour management, significant incidents, sanctions and single separation require improvement. Managers have failed to ensure that the information documented accurately reflects staff practice. This is a missed opportunity for staff to evidence the generally good support that they offer to young people when helping them to manage their challenging behaviour, risks and vulnerabilities.</p> <p>Staff are trained in behaviour management and the use of physical restraint. They make good use of this training and positive relationships to support young people at times of crises. Young people did not raise any concerns during the inspection and feel that staff use physical restraint appropriately. Staff speak to young people about these types of experiences but the home's records do not always reflect that these conversations have taken place or what impact it has had. This is also the case for single separation or when sanctions are imposed.</p> <p>Positive behaviour is reinforced through boundary setting, positive relationships and effective use of the home's reward system. Young people are well motivated to aspire to higher levels of the rewards system and enjoy benefitting from the additional privileges that this brings. The relatively new staff team needs to further develop an understanding of restorative practice, in particular when giving consequences for negative behaviour. A number of sanctions reviewed by the inspectors were punishment focused and not related to the misdemeanour, for example a power ban for smoking in the cookery room. These types of responses are missed opportunities to engage young people in discussions about how their behaviour impacts on them and others, put right what they have done wrong and to improve their behaviour.</p> <p>Single separation is used in line with regulations when young people present a risk to themselves and others. The majority of incidents are for a very short period of time. Records are maintained of these types of incidents, but vary in quality, with some needing significant improvement to ensure that they contain all the required details.</p> <p>Mobility, which are planned and approved trips out into the local area, are managed effectively to ensure that the risk of absconding is minimised when young people are out with staff or escorts on visits. Procedures are in place should a young person abscond. These have been implemented on two occasions when young people have absconded from escorts at court, securing a quick and safe return to the centre.</p> <p>The home has a policy that clearly outlines the various types of searching of young people and the environment. Weekly searches of communal areas and young people's bedrooms are undertaken by staff, to ensure safety and security. All young people are searched using a 'pat down and electronic wand' when they are</p>	

first admitted to the home or are returning from mobility. There has been an increase in prohibited items being brought into the home by young people. This has been limited to smoking materials, evident through the increase in smoking-related incidents. For example, on one occasion, a newly admitted young person, who was upset about being placed in secure accommodation, set fire to her bedding with a lighter that she had managed to bring in. Staff promptly extinguished the fire and removed the damaged quilt. They had opportunity but failed to acquire the lighter which resulted in a second attempt to set a fire. Good oversight by managers picked up that staff had not been thorough in their initial searching of the young person and that they had not been effective in their efforts to remove the lighter. They have recognised the need to review their searching procedures and are in the process of doing so.

Since the previous inspection, there have been three child protection referred to the local authority child protection team. The registered manager works collaboratively with other agencies. As a result, investigations are conducted without delay and in the best interest of young people's safety. The manager maintains a chronological record of actions taken. However, these records are not fully complete and up-to-date. It was therefore not possible to verify that the home's policies and procedures were fully adhered to and that satisfactory outcomes had been achieved.

Young people are looked after by a staff team that has the skills to form respectful and supportive relationships. Observations confirmed that staff maintain appropriate boundaries while enjoying playful banter with the young people. The staff's interaction with the young people demonstrates that they not only enjoy spending time with them, but they also genuinely care about them. All young people spoken to said that they feel safe, and that there are staff members that they can talk to and share any concerns or anxieties they may have.

A number of new staff have been recruited since the last inspection. Prospective staff are put through a rigorous process, which include a face-to-face interview with young people. Relevant checks are undertaken before new staff start work at the home, to ensure that they are suitable to work with vulnerable young people. Records kept in the home are not consistently updated to ensure that they mirror the comprehensive information retained at the local authority head office.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The manager, who is well qualified and suitably experienced, has been registered with Ofsted since May 2014. He maintains a strategic role and demonstrates a	

desire to drive the service forward. He is well supported by the local authority and has a very clear remit, which is to provide a well-functioning secure children's home. He has a good understanding of the home's strengths and plans for improvement are well thought out and fully incorporated into the home's strategic business plan that is under constant review.

The home continues to develop its identity as part of the process of rebuilding the service. There have been a number of significant changes since the manager came into post, the most recent being the decision to end the home's contract with the Youth Justice Board and to focus solely on providing care for young people placed under section 25 of the Children Act 1989. Positively, this has given the manager more control of admissions, facilitating a growth in occupancy as the new staff team becomes established. It has also brought a change in regime, allowing a particular focus on the extensive needs of young people who are placed in secure accommodation for their own safety, for example, those at risk of sexual exploitation or those who require intense support regarding their emotional well-being in order to keep them safe.

Young people benefit from the care and support of an extremely diverse and multi-skilled staff team. There is a good combination of experienced and new staff who care enthusiastically for the young people, evidenced throughout this inspection. New staff are well inducted and confirm that they are given full support to help them to prepare for this challenging role. Restructuring of the management team means that senior staff are more visible on the units, providing better day-to-day support for staff and young people. There is clear delegation of responsibility with middle managers playing a major part in influencing the way in which staff are developed and care is provided. This has helped this relatively new and dedicated team to establish good foundations on which to hone their skills and competencies in supporting this highly complex and challenging group of young people.

The arrangements for supervision and training are good. Team managers and assistant team managers maintain oversight of these areas and ensure that all staff receive regular supervision and have access to purposeful and relevant training opportunities. This includes training in the therapeutic model of care, Pillars of Parenting, which is a model based on emotional warmth and resilience, child-sexual exploitation and training in line with the government's 'Prevent' agenda. All staff are qualified to level 3 Diploma or equivalent, working towards it or will be registered to undertake a qualification once they have completed their induction and probationary period.

All of the requirements from the previous inspection have been suitably addressed. Young people's case records have been improved to ensure that they are complete, up to date and relevant to young people's care experiences. Monitoring and oversight of actual restraint practice have improved. This has enabled managers to identify shortfalls or concerns and to make improvements or take action when necessary. Young people are much safer as a result of this, but this good level of scrutiny needs to be extended to the associated records.

Some progress has been made in addressing the recommendations from the last inspection. Young people confirm that the quality of food has improved and that they are more readily involved in making choices about the menu. The independent person is now given access to closed circuit television footage of physical restraints, to enable them to assess whether staff practice is appropriate and safe. Again, there is a lack of diligence in checking the associated records that contain a number of recording shortfalls. Young people have continued to benefit from the development of the emotional intelligence profiling tool in education. Staff are in the process of extending this to the care setting which is a very positive move. Plans are in place to develop further the vocational resources available to young people, and work is ongoing to improve how IT is used to monitor young people's education attendance, progress and achievements.

Scrutiny and oversight at a strategic level are exceptionally rigorous. The manager undertakes a range of monitoring activities that are designed to review the overall quality of care provided in the home. Regulation 45 reports, which are completed bi-annually, are comprehensively detailed and highly evaluative. They identify emerging themes, patterns and trends, which are used to inform staff practice as well as the future development of the service. The need to focus so intensely on service development means that managers have not been consistently rigorous in other monitoring activities. As a result, there have been occasions when they have failed to identify and address shortfalls such as incomplete behaviour management and recruitment records. Furthermore, critical scrutiny by the independent visitor has also failed to pick up a number of these shortfalls. Other aspects of the regulation 44 visits need to improve. The views of young people, their parents and professionals are not always represented in the independent visitor's report, and on occasion the visitor has not made clear their opinion about how effectively young people are safeguarded. The manager has recognised the need to improve this process, to ensure that it is purposeful and effective, for example, re-formatting the report to ensure that it is individually tailored to the secure setting.

Young people's care is continuously assessed, monitored and reviewed from admissions to discharge. A range of information-sharing forums are used well by staff and managers to ensure that care practice is informed and is clearly focused on meeting the needs of each young person. Strong links with a range of partner agencies, including NHS England and the LSCB, helps to promote a collaborative approach to service delivery.

	Judgement grade
Outcomes in education and related learning activities	Good

Since the last inspection, the education department has maintained a strong focus on good teaching, managing and improving young people's behaviour and improving outcomes. Recommendations set out in the last inspection report have been addressed to varying degrees. Work on profiling the emotional development of young people is progressing well and provides a valuable mechanism for identifying key areas for support and for determining the progress that young people make. IT requirements have been audited, and options for ensuring educational and administrative needs are catered for were being considered at the time of the inspection. Some progress has been made in extending opportunities for young people to sample vocational education: work on a hair and beauty salon had just been completed at the time of the inspection, and work will commence on a drama and music room during the summer holiday period.

The leadership and management of education are good, and staff have high expectations of young people. The age profile of residents has changed since the last inspection, with significantly more young people in the 15-plus age range. As recognised, this changing profile has brought to sharper focus the need to extend the vocational curriculum, to help young people to consider further education and employment options on leaving the home. Funding decisions for improving the security of a facility for aspects of motor vehicle and construction work were being awaited at the time of the inspection. Although education has adopted different approaches to teaching aspects of craft and design technology during the long-term absence of a teacher, opportunities for learning in this area, which are enjoyed by young people, were limited at the time of the inspection.

Young people arrive at the home with little, if any, information about their educational background and attainment. Initial assessments of their English and mathematics skills are completed carefully, shortly after arrival, together with wide-ranging achievement tests. Information gained from these assessments, along with that from emotional profiles, is used well to plan learning and to establish realistic progress targets. With young people increasingly staying at the home for relatively short periods, early clarification of learning needs is essential to improving outcomes. Young people progress during lessons together and the standard of their behaviour is recorded and reviewed during end-of-education staff meetings to identify changes of approach or interventions as necessary.

Teachers manage young peoples' behaviour well during lessons, set clear boundaries and expectations and use rewards and sanctions consistently and fairly. Teachers are careful to ensure that young people understand the implications of transgressions and why sanctions are being applied. Staff are skilled at de-escalating potentially disruptive situations, but when the needs arise young people are removed from lessons calmly with minimum interruption. Along with the changing age profile of residents since the last inspection, young peoples' behaviour is also more challenging and their reactions to different circumstances less predictable. Although teachers know the young people well and are sensitive to changes in their moods, the unpredictability of their reactions at times results in disruptions that impede learning. Teachers consistently challenge the use of

inappropriate language but agency staff providing cover do not do so.

Teaching and learning continue to be good overall, and teachers engage well on a one-to-one basis with young people. Teachers set tasks and activities which interest and motivate young people, ensuring that they are appropriate for individuals of often widely differing abilities. Young people are motivated well by practical activities. They produce work of a high standard in art, for example, and often surprise themselves by what they can achieve. The IT facilities in the art room limit the use of technology for creative purposes as well as the development of young people's IT skills through activities that they enjoy. Most young people work hard in the sports hall and gym, developing interests that they can continue to pursue when they leave. Teachers are careful to adapt their teaching approaches in subjects such as English and mathematics to accommodate the needs of different young people and their often short concentration span in these lessons. Young people's work is displayed prominently in classrooms and in the reception area to the home.

Educational outcomes are good. By far the majority of young people make good progress in their achievements and behaviour. They have appropriate opportunities to achieve qualifications and are encouraged well to sit GCSE examinations when appropriate, although one young person who spoke to inspectors explained that at times it can be difficult to revise in the home. Teachers track the progress that the young people make carefully, and they record progress, achievements and behaviour during each lesson. The information provides a useful overview of the progress made by each young person and informs weekly discussions with their personal tutors in which targets for improvement are agreed. The information is also used as part of an incentives system that recognises effort and good behaviour. Although tracking information is used well to improve outcomes for young people there is still work to be done to ensure that information is easily accessible through the efficient use of IT.

Young people have good access to careers advice and guidance. Education is very proactive in helping young people to find appropriate college or training placements when they leave, and in organising relevant activities to help them to prepare for progression through mobility arrangements. The education department's endeavours are, however, often frustrated by a lack of information about placement arrangements.

Young people have access to varied and well-thought-out enrichment activities during holiday periods, which are organised by teaching assistants. These link well to the curriculum, are enjoyed by young people and include useful external inputs on, for example, health-related topics, gang affiliation and drugs misuse, and they provide opportunities to sample vocational activities. Regular enrichment activities provided by Southampton Football Club are popular and help young people to develop their understanding of business and enterprise.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 that 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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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