

SC470645

Registered provider: Surecare Residential Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care for up to four children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is one of a small group run by an independent provider. A psychologist offers direct psychological support to the children alongside consultation for the staff. The provider also operates a school.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 May 2017

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	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: 21 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

One compliance notice was issued on 2 March 2017. A monitoring visit took place on 17 March 2017 and found that managers and leaders had met the compliance notice.

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home requires improvement to be good because

- Although all of the children attend an education provision, some of the children fail to attend consistently.
- Communication with professionals is not always consistent or effective.
- The provider's policy on bullying is not factually correct and requires updating.
- There have been many changes in staffing. This has had an impact on the consistency of practice and care.
- Staff have not received supervision in line with the home's policy.
- Not all eligible staff employed to work at the home have completed the required level 3 diploma.
- The home's statement of purpose has not been reviewed/updated.
- Managers and staff do not assess the risk of new placements to the existing children, and vice versa.
- Life-story work and the recording of children's memories of their time spent living in the home are not undertaken.

The children's home's strengths

- Staff have developed good relationships with the children, and the children said that they can talk to all of the staff.
- Children have the opportunity to spend time directly with a psychologist.
- There is a new manager in post who has a clear vision of the improvements required at the home.
- The incidents of children going missing from the home have reduced and children report that they feel safe at the home.
- Individual risk assessments are comprehensive and updated regularly.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/02/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
24/05/2016	Full	Good
25/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/05/2015	Full	Requires improvement

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
<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must:</p> <p>(1)(a) enable, inspire and lead a culture in relation to the children's home that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential;</p> <p>(b) promote their welfare.</p> <p>(2)(a) 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;</p> <p>(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child.</p>	30/06/2017
The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(3)(a)(b))	30/06/2017
The registered person must ensure that an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification, the level 3 diploma for residential childcare (England) ('the level 3 diploma'), or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the level 3 diploma, by the relevant date. (Regulation 32(4)(5))	30/09/2017
The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(a)(b))	30/06/2017
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy for the prevention of bullying in the home, which must in particular set out the procedure for dealing with an allegation of bullying. (Regulation 34(3))	30/06/2017

Recommendations

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

- The registered person should only accept placements for children when they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and when they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- The home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. Staff should understand their important role in encouraging the child to reflect on and understand their history, according to their age and understanding. Staff should keep and encourage children to keep appropriate memorabilia of their time spent living at the home and help them to record significant events. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

Inspection judgements

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

Three children live at the home, one of whom moved out during this inspection. This move was unplanned, following a decision by the provider to end the placement after the child displayed several incidents of aggressive behaviour. The home has been through an unsettled time, with many changes in staffing and placements. There is a new manager in post. She understands the shortfalls and the improvements that are required.

All of the children attend education. External professionals said that this is an improvement from the children's starting points at the home. However, some professionals have voiced concerns that there has been a decline in attendance. Professionals also raised concerns about one child failing to arrive at their education on time. A social worker said, 'The staff group has difficulties in remaining consistent in getting him up. The decline in attendance was reported by the school and not the home.' A teacher said, 'I feel that the home needs to challenge consistently any refusal to attend education by a child.' Repeated non-attendance does not provide children with the access to education that they need in order to reach their full academic potential.

Transitions out of the home since the last inspection have been unplanned. A recent planned admission ended after five days. Although the manager had planned the admission, the information shared by the placing authority prior to admission did not fully describe the child's needs. This admission led to police involvement being required. A police officer said, in relation to this particular child, 'The home contacts the police

appropriately. However, staff need to improve in managing very difficult behaviours.' Despite the manager's challenge to the placing authority and requests for additional, relevant information about the child, the placement was not sustainable.

The manager provides weekly or monthly reports, as requested by placing authorities. A social worker said, 'I'm very happy with the thorough weekly reports received.' However, another social worker said, 'I receive monthly feedback from the home as agreed, but the communication needs to be improved as it is inconsistent within the staff team. I have received information from the school and a parent which should have been provided by the home.' This means that the home has failed to share important information, and this could prevent the child from progressing.

The home does not keep any records of life-story work undertaken, and the children do not have albums or memory boxes of their time spent at the home. This means that, when the children move on, they do not have any memorabilia to take with them to remind them of their history and this chapter of their childhood.

The provider has met the two previous requirements regarding behaviour management and policy implementation. The two remaining children engage well with one another and staff. The manager has achieved this by promoting the use of the home's pathfinding incentive system. The children complete small, achievable daily tasks, which they earn points for. The children save the rewards up for an item or activity that they would like. This approach enables the children to understand and benefit from positive interactions.

The provider employs a clinical psychologist to visit the children. Some of the children engage well with this service. This specialist support helps the children to gain a better understanding of their family relationships and provides guidance to staff on strategies to implement to support the children. The staff support the children's health needs by ensuring that the children attend all of their health appointments. All of the children are registered with the local doctor, dentist and optician.

All professionals spoken with say that the children have developed good, trusting relationships with the staff. During this inspection, the children presented as happy and secure in their interactions with staff.

The children know how to complain. There have been two complaints since the last full inspection. The children are included in the process, their opinions are recorded, and they sign and comment to say that they are happy with the outcome.

The manager makes arrangements for an independent advocate to visit and speak with the children individually. This ensures that the children have the opportunity to express any concerns that they may have regarding their current and future care plans.

The children are encouraged to follow a healthy diet and gain independence skills by learning to cook their favourite meals, with help from staff.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

The manager has met a previous requirement relating to consistent implementation of the safeguarding policy. There have been no safeguarding incidents since the last inspection. The designated officer said, 'This is not a home that I have concerns about. It seeks advice appropriately and works in line with protocol, and the staff are proactive in following safeguarding procedures.'

The last inspection highlighted a concern that the fire drills were not effective due to children, on occasions, refusing to evacuate the building. The staff have explained the importance of fire safety awareness to the children. This requirement is met as fire drills are now undertaken routinely, with all of the children exiting the building.

Physical interventions at the home have reduced over time. The child's view is obtained and is documented well. The staff record any strategy used that has helped to de-escalate the situation. This gives clear guidance to all staff on what has worked well and interventions to follow in the future to reduce incidents further.

There has been one incident of bullying since the last full inspection. The children know how to report to staff. The staff spoke with both the victim and perpetrators to address the issue to prevent recurrence. The children have the opportunity to sign and comment to say that they are happy with the outcome. However, the provider's bullying policy states that the home has a postbox which children can use to post a note about any incidents anonymously. This does not give accurate information, because the postbox is no longer in the home.

Children say that they feel safe living at the home and that they can speak to staff if they are worried or upset. A child said, 'I like it here. I feel safe and I like the staff.' Social workers report that the home's strength is the relationships that staff build with the children. One social worker said, 'He [child] is safe and secure at the placement. The staff are very good with him. I have witnessed some brilliant interactions.'

The new manager has made improvements in ensuring that notifications of significant events are notified to Ofsted. The manager monitors the incident records and all incidents requiring notification are correctly made. This provides Ofsted with current information about incidents at the home.

Risk assessments were raised as a shortfall at the last inspection. Good-quality individual risk assessments are in place which outline the risks and strategies to manage challenging behaviours safely. The manager now regularly monitors the risk assessments and has a handover system in place to ensure that all staff are aware of any updates and strategies identified. However, the home has no assessment in place to fully consider the impact that any newly admitted child may have on the existing group of children. The manager uses 'matching criteria', but these do not fully consider all of the risks to each child.

One of the children has a history of self-harm and, since admission to the home, has

self-harmed twice. The incidents are recorded well. Work has been undertaken with the child to gain their feelings. The child's social worker said, 'This is a significant reduction, made possible by the response from the home.'

Sanctions are fair and proportionate. Positive behaviour is recognised and rewarded appropriately. The staff discuss the sanction imposed on a child, and the child has the opportunity to comment and sign. This helps the child to gain an understanding of any consequences and develop skills to reduce negative behaviours.

The staff implement the home's comprehensive missing from care policy. There has been a reduction in the number of incidents of missing from home, because the current group is settled and has good relationships with the staff. The staff liaise with the police and are proactive in requesting return home interviews.

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

The provider has appointed a manager. She is in the process of registering with Ofsted. She is appropriately qualified and has a clear vision for the home. Several staff have recently left and the provider has recruited new staff. The manager reports that, throughout this time, the existing staff team has continued to remain positive.

Regular staff meetings provide staff with the opportunity to discuss the children and strategies for working with them. However, staff are not receiving one-to-one supervision regularly or at the frequency set out in the home's own policy and individual supervision agreements. This does not provide the staff with the support and guidance that they need or ensure that there is robust oversight of staff's practice.

A requirement relating to managing the home in line with the ethos set out in the statement of purpose was raised at the last inspection. This requirement has not been met, because further work is required to ensure that all new staff are working in a consistent manner to enable children to reach their full potential. The new staff have received mandatory training and are aware of the ethos of the home. However, staff members' ability to encourage and motivate the children to consistently attend education remains a shortfall.

There are both adequate staffing at the home and no gaps on the rota. All eligible permanent staff have completed or are enrolled on the level 3 diploma. However, the bank staff who are regularly employed by the service have not completed the qualification.

The home's statement of purpose has not been updated to reflect changes in practice. Recent amendments have resulted in updates to the staffing arrangements. However, this version was not submitted to Ofsted as required by regulation. Lack of current information in the statement of purpose does not provide staff, parents or relevant professionals with accurate information about the home.

The children are encouraged by the manager to attend the regular children's meetings. This means that the children have the opportunity to voice their opinions to staff. The

staff spoken to understand the strengths of the home and know the children very well.

Staff spoken to were very complimentary about the new manager's style of leadership. They said that positive changes have already been made. All of the staff present as fully committed to ensuring that improvement continues.

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 difference 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 who 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: SC470645

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Surecare Residential Ltd

Registered provider address: Surecare Limited, Mey House, Bridport Road, Poundbury, Dorset DT1 3QY

Responsible individual: Emma Barr

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector(s)

Lynne Drage, social care inspector

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