

# 1246449

Registered provider: New Forest Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home was registered in February 2017. It is registered to provide care for up to four children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home offers short stays (usually of around three months) for young people in crisis. The home is based in a semi-rural location and uses a variety of settings (for example, lodges and caravans) which young people may stay in or move between during their time here. Ridge Farm is an administrative base, but may accommodate all children in placement if required to. Children and young people are cared for using a high (two-to-one) staff ratio.

**Inspection dates:** 28 and 29 June 2017

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account** **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** Not applicable

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Not applicable

**Enforcement action since last inspection**

None

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people develop positive routines while residing at the home.
- Staff offer a wide variety of activities to young people, giving them structure and new opportunities and experiences.
- Young people are supported to address long-term health needs.
- Staff successfully support young people to reduce their risk-taking behaviours.
- Young people begin to self-regulate and manage their behaviours and emotions.
- Staff swiftly form relationships of trust with young people.
- Managers rigorously assess venues and the location where young people stay.
- Effective links with professionals outside of the home ensure that care plans are detailed and explore all identified needs and risk.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Safeguarding documentation and records are not robust or detailed and in one instance not accurate. They do not detail the decision-making processes needed to ensure the safety of the children. The audit trail is weak.
- Missing plans do not detail the required actions of staff to manage incidents.
- Staff do not have access to all required documents.
- The admission register is incomplete.

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

### Recommendations

- All managers working in a children's home must have the qualification in regulation 28(2) within the relevant timescales listed in regulation 28(3). All staff in a care role, including external agency or bank staff, must have the qualification in regulation 32(4) within the relevant timescale listed in regulation 32(5). The registered person may extend the time period if the member of staff hasn't worked in the role for a prolonged period, such as sick leave or maternity leave, or if it is not reasonable to expect the member of staff to complete in this timescale due to the nature of the hours they work. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.12)
- Children must be listened to and enabled to report any allegations at the earliest opportunity. Staff should report any allegation of abuse immediately to a senior manager within the home. Any allegation of harm or abuse must be addressed in line with the home's child protection policy. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 44, paragraph 9.17)
- Regulations 35-39 detail the records that must be kept in children's homes. All children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely whilst they remain in the home. Case records must be kept up-to-date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. Children's case records must be kept for 75 years from the date of birth of the child, or if the child dies before the age of 18, for 15 years from the date of his or her death. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards, page 62, paragraph 14.3).
- The registered person must specify the procedures to be followed and the roles and responsibilities of staff when a child is missing from care or away from the home without permission and how staff should support the child on return to the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.28).
- The children's guide should help children to understand:
  - what the day to day routines of the home are ('what happens in the home');
  - the Statement of Purpose of the home (the care they can expect to receive while living there);
  - how to make a complaint in line with the home's complaints procedure;
  - how they can access advocacy support or independent advocacy if eligible; and
  - how to contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner.
 ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22)
- 13.4 It is good practice for a note of the content and/or outcomes of supervision sessions to be kept and to ensure that both the person giving the supervision and

staff member have a copy of the record. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.4)

## **Inspection judgements**

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The home is in its first year of registration. It offers short-term placements to young people in crisis.

Young people make good progress from their initial starting points while living at the home. They engage in routines and activities which develop skills that have a positive impact on their well-being and general health.

Staff swiftly form relationships of trust with young people, enabling young people to feel safe and secure. Young people are supported through high staff ratios; they receive lots of attention, care, support and encouragement to make positive choices.

Staff support young people to meet their health needs. Young people address long-standing health needs which previously they were not able to do. Staff make referrals to health services when required and can access specialist in-house services if needed.

Young people engage in daily planned meaningful activities and routines. These provide a wide variety of activities, including water sports, art, fishing, trampolining, boxing, visits to places of interest, photography, reading and many more. Young people have personalised programmes. Young people have experienced personal achievements, developing new skills while exploring and having new experiences. A young person has achieved an award in rock climbing; another is developing their skills and evidencing this through the recognised ASDAN programme. Young people have gained stability from the full activity schedules and programmes, while others have developed new passions, interests and hobbies. Staff engage in activities alongside young people and this has helped them form trusting relationships.

Young people are beginning to learn how to self-regulate their behaviour, feelings and emotions. Staff support young people in times of high anxiety and young people are beginning to explore previous traumas and experiences.

Young people do not attend formal education settings, but they are engaging in a variety of other learning opportunities and experiences. They are developing their independence, life, social and personal care skills. Young people are educated about risk and the impact of risk-taking behaviours. Staff explore topics such as sex education, substance misuse and personal hygiene. Staff support young people to plan, shop, prepare meals and budget, promoting future life skills.

Staff support young people to engage with services specific to their plans. They also encourage and involve young people in all of their reviews and meetings.

Staff facilitate and assist with family contact. They follow detailed contact plans, which helps to ensure that contact between young people and families is well managed for all parties. Staff advocate effectively for young people; they request reviews and raise issues with placing authorities if they consider that plans do not accurately address the young people's needs.

The voice of young people is regularly sought; staff work closely with young people and frequent purposeful conversations occur. Young people talk to staff about their wishes, feelings and aspirations and the highs and lows of each day. Young people are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms and living spaces. They choose their weekly menus and activities. Staff review care plans and targets with young people weekly to review what they wish to aspire to and achieve while at the home.

Detailed plans enable staff to provide practical care and support to young people. Staff work with others to ensure that plans meet the needs of young people. They have sourced additional services to support a young person's needs. Records accessible in the home did not provide the required local authority documentation. The home's admission register was incomplete and did not provide all of the required information.

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

Young people feel safe while living at the home. They develop relationships of trust with staff, which enable them to share their worries and concerns. Staff support young people to feel safe and secure through these relationships. Staff treat young people with respect and dignity. Young people are supported through high staff levels, which positively reduces risk-taking behaviours and managing situations of crisis.

There has been one episode of going missing; the young person was welcomed back to the home on their return. The missing policy details what is required of staff if an incident occurs. Staff do not have individual risk management plans detailing specific response and management strategies for each young person in this event.

Staff are trained in the home's preferred approach to behaviour management. Positive behaviour support plans are practical, detailed and provide staff with clear guidance to follow when assisting young people in crisis. Staff are skilled at identifying precursors to a crisis and use a variety of strategies to de-escalate young people's behaviour. Staff have used physical intervention, but do so in its least restrictive form and for the shortest timescale possible. Detailed records provide the required information to enable effective review of intervention and outcomes. Staff have not given any sanctions to young people. On occasions, young people complete reparation tasks or chat with staff to review the impact of their behaviour.

Staff have good knowledge and understanding about how to keep young people safe and secure; they access regular training, which ensures that their knowledge is

current and up to date.

Safeguarding concerns are well managed and responded to. Managers seek guidance and advice from the local safeguarding board when required. However, the quality of and level of detail in recording is weak. All actions and conversations are not recorded in full, leaving an insufficient record of events and actions taken. The trail of evidence is not thorough and may not withstand serious review and scrutiny. The chronology creates confusion because all aspects are not recorded explicitly; all concerns have not been reported in a timely manner.

When young people have made complaints, staff have explored and investigated the majority of these swiftly, providing young people with a response and outcome. One was not responded to swiftly. Once it was identified, managers acted and provided a response to the young person. There have been no complaints made by anyone outside of the home.

Staff educate young people in how to manage risk and support them to take age-appropriate risks. They provide practical advice and education about the impact of risk-taking behaviours. This improves young people's knowledge and understanding and they make more informed decisions and choices as a result.

Staff complete detailed risk assessments, which explore many known risk factors. There are location risk assessments for each venue used for overnight stays. Risk assessments detail actions required to minimise risk: they are regularly reviewed and updated. Risk assessments also form part of the admission documentation for each young person; these do not routinely state the impact a new admission may have on others, although they are not living together but may share some structured activity time.

Staff adhere to safer recruitment practice and newly appointed staff are provided with a thorough induction to the home. They complete a probation in which their practice and knowledge are regularly reviewed and monitored.

Leaders and managers ensure that the home and other locations are well maintained and any damage is swiftly reported and repaired.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

An effective, appropriately qualified manager leads the home. He has good understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses. Systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of care provided are well utilised and lead to continuous improvement.

The home's development plan spans several different documents; there is not a clear action plan to track and monitor implementation.

Staff access a wide variety of training specific to their role, including behaviour

management, first aid, and the home's own ethos and approach. Staff meet regularly to review and reflect on their practice and they feel supported by this process. They focus on developing and learning specific approaches for individuals to support them while living here. Staff access regular effective supervision, which allows additional opportunity to reflect on their practice. Supervision notes do not clearly detail actions and performance aspects to monitor.

All except one member of staff have achieved the required qualification.

There is regular additional scrutiny of the home and service; the manager has acted on issues for improvement identified.

The manager has established good links with professionals, families and others outside of the home. The effective working relationship has a positive impact on the formulation and review of young people's plans. Young people who have moved out of the home have settled well into new home settings and placements, demonstrating the effectiveness of this crisis intervention service.

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

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** 1246449

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** New Forest Care Ltd

**Registered provider address:** New Forest Care Ltd, West Shore House, West Street, Hythe, Southampton, Hampshire SO45 6AA

**Responsible individual:** Michael Ferne

**Registered manager:** Adam Heggan

## Inspector

Amanda Maxwell, social care inspector



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