

# 1235576

Registered provider: South West Childcare Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a small private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

**Inspection dates:** 9 to 10 November 2017

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

How well children 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:** 7 February 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:**

Not applicable

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Care planning is of a good standard. This includes enhanced sensory care plans, demonstrating elements of outstanding practice.
- Children are regularly and effectively consulted in respect of their care planning and support needs. A good example of this is seen in the management of challenging

behaviour, within which children play an active role in deciding the appropriate consequences for their own challenging behaviour.

- Both of the children who live at the home told the inspector that they felt safe, and that they were happy in their home.

The children's home's areas for development:

- One child is not attending any formal education, despite creative approaches to engage them in educational activities being consistently taken. This is an ongoing area of need which is not fully met.
- Rigorous advocacy is lacking in order to support the very best outcomes for children. This includes the need to advocate on behalf of children to obtain important care planning documentation.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/02/2017	Full	Good

## 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, the 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>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard requires the registered person to ensure that staff understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers. Help each child to understand the importance of education and the value of education, learning, training and employment. Help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. Help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 8(2)(a)(iii)(iv)(viii)(x))</p>	<p>11/01/2018</p>

### Recommendations

- Where the placing authority or another relevant person does not provide the input and services needed to meet a child’s needs during their time in the home, the home must challenge them to meet the child’s needs (see regulation 5(c)). This specifically relates to the need for staff to ensure that the relevant external care planning documents are completed in a timely manner, in order to promote the very best outcomes for children. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 12, paragraph 2.8)
- The registered person should ensure that, in line with their individual health plans and the ethos of the home, children are offered advice and support and guidance on health and well-being to enhance and supplement that provided by their school through personal, social and health education (PSHE). The importance of this supplementary guidance is amplified when children have not been attending a formal educational setting for a lengthy period of time. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 35, paragraph 7.18)
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the

arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. This specifically relates to the management of children's safe internet use. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

## **Inspection judgements**

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

Care planning is excellent. Care plans provide clear guidance to staff that helps them to understand the children's needs in depth. The plans set out in detail how each child demonstrates their emotions through their behaviour, for example, how children demonstrate their need for affection in various ways. This approach to care planning further enables staff to understand how to meet the emotional needs of children. This attuned approach has limited frustrations for children, and supported positive relationships between staff and children.

The ethos of the home is one of unconditional positive regard for children. The staff spoken with during the inspection conveyed this clearly within discussions, and within the inspector's observations of them while they spent time with children. Praise and reward systems far outweigh the use of consequences to manage unwanted behaviour. As a result, children's emotional welfare is supported to develop positively.

One child is not attending formal education, although creative approaches to engage them in informal educational are consistently taken by staff. This is an ongoing area of need which is not fully met. The other child is thriving at school and his attendance is excellent.

Contact with family members and friends is supported by staff. This helps children to maintain important support networks and relationships away from their home.

Both children are supported to access a number of activities. These include a variety of clubs, such as trampolining, youth club, personal training and laser tag. Both children were also taken on a holiday abroad during the summer months, which they greatly enjoyed.

Feedback received from one child's social worker further echoes the highly nurturing environment provided by staff at the home. The social worker views that the care provided to children is of a high quality. He conveyed that staff are nurturing and focused on the needs of children.

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

One child was repeatedly going missing from the home due to their refusal to attend school. For a number of months, this child was visiting an unsuitable location and placing himself at risk. Staff took the appropriate safeguarding action. In addition, they persisted with a nurturing approach. This has resulted in the child no longer being absent from their home, and a reduction in risk-taking behaviours.

Staff are able to manage incidents of challenging behaviour well. Both children continue to make significant progress in respect of their ability to manage their own emotions. As a result, there have been no significant incidents at the home since the summer.

Mandatory safeguarding training for all staff is up to date. Only three staff members are yet to complete the higher safeguarding training. Specialised external training has also been sourced in order to further enhance staff's ongoing professional development in this area. However, the escalation of concerns system regarding the Local Safeguarding Children Board is not known by senior staff members. This means that there is a lack of knowledge regarding the correct process to ensure the effective challenge of other professionals in respect of their safeguarding responsibilities.

Overall, the approach staff take to managing risks for children is of a good standard. However, the monitoring of safe internet use is not currently rigorous enough. The use of social networking sites by one child is not closely monitored, despite being clarified as a support need within care planning. Staff report that children have an open dialogue with them regarding their use of the internet, and that the appropriate filters are in place. However, sites such as Facebook present a different set of risks to children which are not currently reduced enough by staff.

Children are given insufficient advice and guidance in respect of sexual health. This does not prepare them for healthy adult relationships. A recommendation has been made in order to promote this support need.

Both of the children who live at the home told the inspector that they felt safe, and that they were happy in their home. One child told the inspector that the home should be graded as 'excellent'.

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

At the last inspection in February 2017, two requirements were made in respect of the need to improve auditing systems. Independent visitor reports were not being provided to Ofsted in a timely manner, and there was a need for the manager's six-monthly review reports to be completed more promptly. Both of these requirements were met at this inspection.

A further recommendation was made in relation to the need for appropriate supervision to be completed on a regular basis. The recommendation was met during this inspection. Supervision is now planned and completed on a regular basis. The quality of the supervision sampled at this inspection is of a good standard. Recruitment processes are

also safe.

There are a number of senior staff currently overseeing the running of this home. A proposed registered manager is part of this team, and is currently in the process of applying for registration, in order to cover statutory leave for the primary registered manager. No significant concerns were identified regarding these appropriate, short-term arrangements.

Leaders and managers have a good awareness of children's developmental needs. However, rigorous advocacy is lacking in order to support the very best outcomes for children. This includes the need to advocate effectively on behalf of children to ensure that they receive the support and services they require from external professionals and services; including ensuring that essential care planning documentation is obtained.

Children are regularly and effectively consulted in respect of their care planning and support needs. A good example of this is seen in the management of challenging behaviour, within which children play an active role in deciding the appropriate consequences for their own challenging behaviour. There is also a significant emphasis on reward systems which have proven to be effective with both of the children.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and children. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and children. They watched how professional staff work with children and children and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and children 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 children 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:** 1235576

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

**Registered provider:** South West Childcare Services

**Registered provider address:** 46 Durnford Street, First Floor Flat, Plymouth, Devon  
PL1 3QN

**Responsible individual:** Angela Glynn

**Registered manager:** Lucy Scott

## Inspector

Polly Soper, social care inspector

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