

1229977

Registered provider: Oxfordshire County Council

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to six children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home provides short-term care and accommodation, which may be on a shared-care basis, aimed at preventing a family breakdown. It also accommodates children while assessments of their longer-term placement needs are carried out. The home does not offer long-term placements. The home provides an emergency bed.

Inspection date: 17 January 2018

Judgement at last inspection: Requires improvement to be good

Date of last inspection: 4 October 2017

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

The registered person has not addressed all of the requirements and recommendations set at the last inspection, as set out below.

Some improvements have been made in the monitoring and quality assurance systems. Senior managers are informed, on a daily basis, about the previous day's shift and any significant events that occurred. However, the manager was not fully aware that the requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection had not been fully met.

Shortfalls remain in ensuring that children's views are considered and acted on at all times. For example, some issues which children have raised in house meetings have not

been followed up.

The mix of children staying in the home and the ability of the staff team to meet the needs of all children are not being adequately considered in the compatibility assessments. This means that it cannot be assured that all risks between children can be managed effectively.

While there have been some improvements in the quality of some records, for example the record-keeping of key-work sessions, there continue to be shortfalls in others. In one case, the decision-making about a concern raised by a child was not recorded. In another case, despite a multi-agency risk-management planning meeting having been held, the resulting risk assessment was not available to the staff. The internal risk assessments could not, therefore, accurately reflect the decision-making from this meeting. Some records have not been signed and dated.

There have been some improvements in getting staff training up to date. However, for some staff this shortfall remains.

Since the last inspection, the location risk assessment has been reviewed. However, the document is not analytical. Risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these have not been fully considered. For example, crime comparison data have not been analysed and risks to children relating to the local train station and railway tracks have not been assessed and planned for.

There has been a failure to plan and prepare for one child's health needs. The manager was aware that, in the past, the child had experienced a seizure. This information was not followed up adequately with health professionals. There was no guidance for staff about how they should support the child should she have a seizure.

Despite the shortfalls, children have made some good progress. Most children have had a positive experience during their time staying in the home.

Children develop good relationships with staff. Children trust staff and begin to confide in them. Staff also spend good-quality fun time with children. During the inspection, a young person and some staff were having a competitive game of scrabble. This was good-natured and the source of much laughter from all.

Young people are encouraged to follow their interests and, where possible, turn these into learning opportunities. For example, one child, who is adept at cooking, often does the cooking in the home. He has also secured a work placement in a prestigious local restaurant.

Most children engage well with staff and get involved in key-work sessions. The sessions are purposeful and provide children with the opportunity to reflect on their pasts and plan for their futures. For example, one child has used this time to reflect and make positive decisions about how to turn his life around. He has begun to move away from undesirable people he used to associate with and is developing aspirations for his future.

One child who was admitted in an emergency was very well supported by staff until a more suitable, longer-term placement was found for him. He was also very well supported to move into his new placement. Some professionals thought that, due to the child's difficulties in managing his behaviour, he should travel to his new placement via secure transport. Staff successfully challenged this view. Staff planned his move

meticulously and travelled with him. This provided the child with positive memories of the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/10/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/05/2017	Full	Inadequate
16/02/2017	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>7.—(1) The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>(a) develop positive relationships with them;</p> <p>(b) engage with them; and</p> <p>(c) take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>(Regulation 7(1)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>In particular, when children have provided their views, make sure that these are considered and dealt with in a timely way so that children know that they have been listened to.</p>	09/03/2018
<p>12.—The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph 1 requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>(a) that staff—</p> <p>(i) assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans and if necessary make arrangements to reduce any risk of harm to the child.</p>	09/03/2018

<p>(Regulation 12 (2)(a)(i))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person should only accept placements for children where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children and the staff's ability to meet all of the children's needs.</p>	
<p>The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child which: include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry.</p> <p>(Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c))</p>	09/03/2018
<p>13.—(1) The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>(a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>(b) promotes their welfare.</p> <p>(Regulation 13(1)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure the results of reviews of multi-agency risk management meetings are obtained to inform internal assessment and planning.</p>	09/03/2018
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>(a) undertake appropriate continuing professional development.</p> <p>(Regulation 33(4)(a))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that each staff member attends training or updates to training in a timely way.</p>	09/03/2018
<p>13.—(1) The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>(a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>(b) promotes their welfare.</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p> <p>(Regulation 13(1)(2)(a)(b)(h))</p>	09/03/2018
<p>10.—(1) The health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>(a) the health and well-being needs of children are met.</p> <p>(Regulation 10 (1))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that conflicting information about a child's health needs is sufficiently explored in order that staff have</p>	09/03/2018

sufficient information to support the child's health needs.	
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Recommendations

The registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. Providers should refer to the non-statutory advice about the location assessment process. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

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 differences 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.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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: 1229977

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Oxfordshire County Council, County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

Responsible individual: Daniel Ruaux

Registered manager: Paul Jacobs

Inspector

Rosie Dancer, social care inspector

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