Information about this children’s home

This secure children’s home is operated by a local authority and is approved by the Secretary of State to restrict young people’s liberty. The children’s home can accommodate up to seven young people who are aged between 10 and 17 who are placed by local authorities under section 25 of the Children Act 1989.

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.

The commissioning of health services in this home is the statutory responsibility of NHS England under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Education is provided on-site in dedicated facilities.

Inspection date: 13 February 2018

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 18 July 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 good at the last full inspection.

At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness.

Young people make good progress relative to their time in this home. This is because of the exceptionally high levels of support that they receive from a well-led and child-focused staff team. The ongoing development and successful integration of the trauma-informed therapeutic model of care has enabled staff to further develop an insightful understanding of developing attachments with traumatised young people. Indeed, the
meaningful and respectful interactions between young people and staff were extremely noticeable throughout the inspection.

Young people are admitted to the home in a planned and supportive manner. Initial formulation meetings are used effectively to develop appropriate plans that are designed to help young people to find a sense of stability and address the challenges and issues that they face in their often chaotic lives. Staff are consistent in the implementation of these plans, which help young people to come to terms with their past and plan positively for the future. One young person said, ‘I get work in here on relationships and I get it that sometimes I put myself in risky situations and might be exploited. Being here has helped me understand this. I want to go to college when I leave here and I will make sure that I really try in education because I am now in control of my own future.’

There is real ‘team around the child’ approach to care planning. Staff work collaboratively with professionals, including teachers, healthcare staff and social workers, to ensure that young people’s known and emerging needs are routinely met. Managers have high expectations of those involved in planning young people’s care and ensure that they are fully involved in the care planning process. For example, they make clear the expectations on the placing authority to start resettlement planning at the point of admission. One social worker said, ‘Communication is excellent. Staff are really proactive in ensuring that all professionals join meetings. Staff were much focused on having a plan for [name] when she leaves. [Name] is calmer, happier and has engaged really well. I can see that [name] has meaningful attachments with staff and [she] has told me that she now has aspirations for the future.’

Staff practice is informed by well-thought-out and professionally informed risk assessments and behaviour management plans that are constantly reviewed and updated. Staff are consistent in their efforts to implement agreed strategies and these are highly effective in managing and reducing risk-taking behaviours. For example, young people who previously self-harmed rarely display this behaviour while in this home. This is because they feel safe and secure and are able to express their feelings to staff who they trust.

Staff use a good range of behaviour-management practices that have been effective in decreasing the need for restraint. They make good use of positive relationships, knowledge acquired through training and consultation with the psychologist, which minimises the need for corrective measures or enforced behaviour management interventions. Incidents of restraint and single separation are relatively low and are only used when absolutely necessary. Young people are encouraged to reflect on incidents of this type and this helps them to develop alternative ways of managing their emotions and frustrations.

It was noticeable throughout the inspection how relaxed young people were. Staff were constantly engaging them in meaningful conversations while enjoying a wide range of activities as part of the half-term enrichment programme. For example, some of the young people and staff were doing karaoke while another young person was being helped to develop his photography skills. There was an excitable buzz within the group that was looking forward to the afternoon activity involving large spiders, toads and other ‘critters’. Young people confirmed that this is a fun place to be and spoke positively about their time in the home. One young person, who was initially anxious about
inspectors being in the home, gave a ‘big thumbs up’ when asked about her care.

Managers are visible and maintain excellent oversight of the day-to-day running of the home, staff practice and young people’s progress. They use a range of monitoring tools and internal and external reviewing mechanisms effectively to ensure that a high standard of care is consistently maintained. There is a strong commitment to, and a collective ownership of, the home’s improvement plan, which is clearly focused and aspirational about the future care of young people.

Five recommendations from the previous inspection have been fully addressed and notable progress made in relation to a sixth. The manager continues to meet with young people on a weekly basis. This enables young people to confidently raise issues, contribute to discussions and influence the day-to-day running of the home. The manager ensures that young people are kept informed about progress in relation to their requests, which has removed the frustration witnessed at the last inspection. The telephones in young people’s bedrooms have been repaired and systems are in place to ensure that faults are reported and repaired quickly, should they occur. A working agreement has been established between the home and the local police force, making clear the levels of support expected of police, should they be called to the home. Records pertaining to single separation have been improved and detailed records of every type of search are now maintained. The use of sanctions has reduced significantly, with an increased focus on a restorative approach to addressing poor behaviour. However, when sanctions are used, managers are not being rigorous in their evaluation of effectiveness, with a number being repeated despite having no impact on changing behaviour in the long term.

Recent inspection history

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspection date</th>
<th>Inspection type</th>
<th>Inspection judgement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18/07/2017</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21/02/2017</td>
<td>Interim</td>
<td>Improved effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/07/2016</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Requires improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/10/2015</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 46, paragraph 9.36). This is with specific reference to ensuring that when managers evaluate the effectiveness of sanctions, they make sure that they are effective in changing the child’s behaviour.
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: SC031490

Provision sub-type: Secure unit

Registered provider: East Sussex County Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, St Anne’s Crescent, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1UE

Responsible individual: Elizabeth Rugg

Registered manager: Helen Simmons

Inspectors

Paul Scott, social care inspector
Elaine Allison, social care inspector
The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children’s social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children’s services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: http://eepurl.com/iTrDn.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: http://www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018