

SC035500

Registered provider: South Gloucestershire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

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 24 children and young people who are aged between 10 and 18 years.

All of the places available at children's home are commissioned on a contractual basis by the Youth Custody Service (YCS). The YCS may, under certain circumstances, permit local authority children's services to spot purchase a vacant bed at the children's home to enable a local authority to place a young person on welfare grounds 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.

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Inspection dates: 10 to 12 April 2018 and 9 to 10 May 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **requires improvement to be good**

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

Outcomes in education and related learning activities **Good**

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: 7 December 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/12/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
04/07/2017	Full	Good
23/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
13/09/2016	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, 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>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—</p> <p>seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5(d))</p> <p>This specifically relates to improving professional relationships between the home and commissioned health services.</p>	18/06/2018
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff—</p> <p>meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; and</p> <p>understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children. (Regulation 11(1)(b)(c) and (2)(a)(i)(ii)(ix))</p>	18/06/2018
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff—</p> <p>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 the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12(1) and (2)(a)(i))</p>	18/06/2018

<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; and</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(b) and (2)(b)(h))</p>	18/06/2018
<p>The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes all relevant information as detailed in the regulation. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(i-viii))</p>	18/06/2018
<p>The registered person must ensure that within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”) has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p>	18/06/2018
<p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children’s home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45(a)(b)(c))</p>	18/06/2018
<p>The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children’s home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46(1)(2))</p>	18/06/2018

Recommendations

- Staff should look to improve the environment to make it look more welcoming. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.7). This is with specific reference to replacing aging artwork and posters currently displayed around the home.

- Ensure children's bedrooms are only to be searched if the child has been informed or asked for their permission. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.20). Ensure that, when immediate searching is necessary, that there are reasonable grounds for believing that there is a risk to the child's or another person's safety or well-being.
- The ethos of the home should support each young person to learn. In particular, to gain as much evidence as possible and use this to progress their education and career plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18). This is in respect of enabling young people to work towards accredited qualifications in all subjects where this is possible, and to record the work-related skills that young people gain in vocational subjects where accredited qualifications are not available.
- The ethos of the home should support young people to learn. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18). In particular, ensure that young people adopt safe working practices and use appropriate personal protective equipment at all times and in all learning activities.
- Ensure that young people are offered a wide range of activities both indoors and outdoors. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.5). In particular, review how the evening and weekend activity programmes are planned, organised and delivered to young people.
- The registered person must ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair and the principles in 9.35 are respected. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, and paragraph 9.36). This is with specific reference to the monitoring of incidents when young people are held on the floor as part of a restraint incident.
- Ensure sanctions used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, and the staff caring for them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- The registered person must ensure that children in secure homes should only be placed in single separation when necessary to prevent injury to any person (including for example, the child who is being restrained) or to prevent serious damage to the property of any person (including the child who is being restrained). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 50, and paragraph 9.65). This is with specific reference to expecting young people to go to their rooms, without having any choice, after mealtimes.

Inspection judgements

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

Shortfalls in the effectiveness of leadership and management and how well young people are helped and protected are detrimental to their overall experiences and progress.

Young people make some progress in their lives, taking account of their starting points and the circumstances of their placements. They enjoy mostly good and positive relationships with staff, and staff are skilled at quickly developing nurturing relationships with young people. Staff are passionate advocates for young people. They access external agencies, such as the Howard League, when appropriate.

The quality of the home's internal plans relating to the delivery of offence-related programmes are good. A successful review and revision of the key-worker system underpins this area of practice. An assigned staff group has specific time built into the daily routine of the home, enabling the group to deliver direct work and offence-related intervention programmes to young people.

Specialist staff complete initial health assessments to a good standard and within recommended timescales. These staff have the skills and experience necessary to consistently provide young people with attentive and nurturing care.

Young people access all primary healthcare services without delay. A multi-disciplinary mental health team provides a wide range of bespoke interventions. The health team delivers these interventions well to improve young people's emotional well-being before they reach a point of crisis.

Health staff use positivity letters to provide young people with ongoing and meaningful mental health support. Young people receive these letters during their placement and as part of their transition. This excellent initiative boosts young people's emotional well-being, self-esteem and confidence.

Young people can access a wide range of facilities. These facilities provide opportunities for them to develop new skills, hobbies and interests. However, evening and weekend activity programmes are poorly planned, uninspiring and repetitive. Some young people say that current activity plans are 'boring'. This is in contrast to the varied enrichment activities that teaching staff provide. These include learning to play musical instruments.

The physical environment is clean and tidy. The service is proposing to make significant improvements to the fabric of the building over the coming years. Nevertheless, at this time the art exhibitions, pictures and posters in place to create a welcoming environment are out of date and aging.

The arrangements for young people to move from this home and plans for resettlement are good. Staff consult with young people to plan for their futures. They move on from the home in collaboration with the YCS, their placing authority and their families.

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

improvement to be good

Managers use a range of monitoring systems to ensure the safety and security of the environment. However, there is no location assessment in place to highlight any potential safety risks in the local community or surrounding area.

On admission, relevant staff create initial risk assessments for young people. These assessments identify any immediate risks to their safety and welfare. A multi-disciplinary case management team reviews these risk assessments each week. However, additional information gained from other agencies, observations, internal events and incidents is not always recorded in these risk assessments. The exclusion of this information means that these documents do not consistently provide staff with a comprehensive picture of each young person's individual needs.

Some young people benefit from detailed and integrated behaviour management plans. These plans combine information contained within individual risk assessments and internal support plans, and reference young people's previous experiences. These plans support staff to de-escalate potentially challenging behaviours sensitively and using the least restrictive approach. However, managers do not ensure that these plans are always in place for all young people who may benefit from them, or to create precise behaviour management strategies for staff to follow. When staff are aware of how young people's backgrounds influence their actions, they do not always ensure that behaviour management plans demonstrate that they have considered these factors. As a result, when these young people display extreme, self-injurious or challenging behaviours, managers cannot demonstrate that staff always respond to these incidents in the most suitable or consistently agreed way.

Restraints when young people are held on the floor are used. Managers have yet to complete an analysis of the number of ground holds, an evaluation of the reasons why staff are using these holds, or an assessment of the impact that these may have on young people. Subsequently, managers cannot categorically confirm the need to use this form of restraint, rather than others, to manage unsafe behaviours.

Managers and staff do not ensure that records of physical restraint, and other measures of control, always include sufficient detail. For example, comments relating to the effectiveness of a measure used are often generic and not evaluative. This limits the opportunity to support practice improvements.

Incident records do not always include accurate details of all measures of control used in the home. For example, these records do not consistently demonstrate why some young people spend time in their bedrooms after meals, or if young people elect to do this or are directed by staff. This practice appears to have been developed to manage young people's movements and interaction at meal times.

Staff use a 'level system' of incentives and rewards to encourage young people to manage their own behaviours. This approach is mostly effective in encouraging young people to take responsibility for their actions. Staff continue to use sanctions in addition to this level system. They do not make sure that these sanctions always relate to the behaviours displayed or that they are restorative in nature. Subsequently, the use of these sanctions does not always help young people effectively to develop socially aware

behaviours.

A new system is now in place to record incidents of physical restraint, sanctions and single separation. This format does not include all required information, such as the date managers reviewed these incidents, or their authorisation for and confirmation of a prolonged period of separation.

All personal searches are intelligence led. Staff complete these with sensitivity, protecting young people's dignity. However, staff and managers do not apply this good practice ethos when searching young people's bedrooms. This activity is routinely carried out and is not always based on known or suspected risks that may compromise young people's safety.

Managers refer allegations of abuse or harm as required, and complete records of these concerns demonstrating how these matters are addressed. Senior managers work in partnership with external safeguarding officers. The designated officer for the local authority visits the home each month to review physical restraint records and view recorded footage of these events.

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

The registered manager and senior management team work to create a culture in the home that meets young people's needs, taking account of the circumstances of their placement. However, professional relationships between senior managers and health service personnel are poor and ineffectual. Although care staff and health staff work together in some circumstances, there is often a lack of teamwork.

Internal monitoring by the registered manager is weak. Current systems do not support an accurate evaluation of the day-to-day operation of the home. There is a lack of effective management oversight regarding events and incidents in the home that require the use of physical restraint or other measures of control. Monitoring systems assemble quantitative data. However, managers do not assess this information in conjunction with qualitative factors such as young people's individual risk or background trauma.

The quality of care review lacks clear actions to secure ongoing improvements. Furthermore, this review does not include consultation with young people or other agencies.

This monitoring is in contrast to the systems used by the headteacher and newly appointed deputy headteacher. These systems allow education leaders to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and the progress that young people make.

Staff receive practice-related supervision. The quality and frequency of these sessions have improved significantly since the last inspection, affording staff the opportunity to review their practice and learning needs. Managers use these sessions to monitor staff performance and scrutinise their knowledge.

Training programmes reflect young people's needs. These provide care staff with the skills and knowledge that they need to care for and support young people. All eligible care staff hold a relevant qualification or are currently undertaking the appropriate

course.

Outcomes in education and related learning activities: good

Teaching staff help young people to settle into education quickly. These staff use young people's time in induction classes to complete initial assessments. These assessments establish young people's starting points. Teaching staff use this information to personalise curriculum plans.

The headteacher works with each young person's local authority to gain information on their past achievements and learning needs. In some cases, teaching staff still experience difficulties in accessing the pupil premium funding that young people are entitled to. The headteacher continues to raise this issue.

Young people study a good range of academic, vocational and enrichment subjects. These lessons include the core curriculum subjects of English, mathematics and science.

A good proportion of young people, taking account of their age, starting points and time in the home, achieve GCSEs in core subjects and other subjects. However, they are not always able to gain accredited qualifications in all of the subjects that they follow, even when accreditation is available.

Young people gain a good range of practical, work-related and social skills through the study of vocational subjects. Nevertheless, teaching staff do not always record the skills young people gain through non-accredited learning. This limits the evidence that young people have to showcase their skills to employers, colleges or apprenticeship providers.

Teaching staff and instructors do not ensure that young people use required personal protective equipment at all times. This shortfall remains from the last inspection.

Relationships between teaching staff and young people are generally good. These help young people engage well in their learning activities. Young people's behaviour in education has improved since the last inspection and incidents of unacceptable behaviours continue to reduce. In a small minority of lessons, young people make slower progress because of poor and disruptive behaviour.

Teaching staff and education managers provide very good support to young people who are due to leave the home. This includes working with other education providers and professionals. This approach helps young people to re-engage in school, access further education or prepare for training or employment. In addition, teaching staff provide revision activities for young people who have left the home and are sitting GCSE exams in the near future.

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.

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'.

For inspections of secure children's homes, Ofsted is assisted by an inspector from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in Ofsted's evaluation of health services provided for children (authorised by HMCI under section 31 of the Care Standards Act 2000).

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC035500

Provision sub-type: Secure Unit

Registered provider address: South Gloucestershire Adults and Health, PO Box 2083, Castle Street, Thornbury, Bristol BS35 2BR

Responsible individual: Peter Murphy

Registered manager: Alison Sykes

Inspector(s)

Jo Stephenson, lead social care inspector

Graham Robinson, social care inspector

Andrew Hewston, social care inspector

Cathey Moriarty, social care inspector

Malcolm Fraser, further education and skills

Gary Turney, health & justice inspector, Care Quality Commission (CQC)

Shaun Common, lead professional, secure estate

Paula Lahey, regulatory inspection manager

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