

SC038719

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This secure children's home is managed by a local authority. It is approved by the Department for Education to restrict young people's liberty. As well as the living accommodation, there are dedicated facilities on-site for education. The children's home can accommodate up to 16 young people who are aged between 10 and 17 years. Young people are the subject of section 25 of the Children Act 1989 and placed by local authorities.

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.

This inspection has the purpose of informing the Secretary of State on the continuing suitability for this provision to operate as a secure unit to restrict children's liberty.

Inspection dates: 13 to 15 November 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: 14 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/02/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
25/04/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
08/11/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/05/2016	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>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—</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(b))</p>	31/01/2019
<p>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>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(h))</p>	31/01/2019
<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>	31/01/2019
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p>	31/01/2019

there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;

a child protection enquiry involving a child—
is instigated; or
concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or

there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))

Recommendations

- Searching may be necessary where there are reasonable grounds for believing that there is a risk to the child's or another person's safety or well-being. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.20)

This is with specific reference to reviewing the practice of conducting weekly room searches. This is to ensure that room searches are conducted only when individual risk assessments or intelligence evidence that there is a valid reason for conducting a search.

- 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.

- Staff should work to make the children's home an environment that supports children's physical, mental and emotional health. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.3)

Specifically, ensure that staff complete regular infection control audits of the medical room and ensure that stock control of medication is consistently maintained.

- Ensure any sanction used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Specifically, ensure that records contain the information needed and that comments and signatures are legible.

- Children should be in full-time education while they are of compulsory school age,

unless their personal education plan contained within the care plan or other relevant plan states otherwise. The home must aim to support full-time attendance at school unless the child's relevant plan indicates this is not in their best interests. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.14)

This is with regard to reviewing current strategies to improve attendance at the education on-site.

- 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, establish the role of coordinator to ensure that the needs of children with special educational needs and additional learning needs are assessed appropriately and prioritised.

- 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, improve access to information computer technology (ICT) so that teachers and children can benefit from enhanced online access to learning resources and children can work towards qualifications in this subject area.

- 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, maintain the focus on improving teaching and learning by continuing to focus on performance management arrangements and particularly through ongoing access to professional development opportunities for all staff.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress relative to their time in this home. Staff skilfully form positive and reassuring relationships with the children. Most children say that staff are supportive, and the inspectors observed children actively seeking staff out to spend time with them. The children can identify the positive impact that being in this home has had on improving their health and well-being. One young person spoke positively of the support that he has received and can acknowledge the ongoing help that he needs.

Some children say that they enjoy the activities available to them, while other children say that they are bored. This is because the evening and weekend activity programmes sometimes lack opportunities for the children to develop their talents or to explore new interests. Mostly, activities are not organised. The lack of structured activity leaves some children uninterested and does not encourage them to maintain existing hobbies or to develop new interests.

Children's views, wishes and feelings are considered informally and formally using several consultation systems. Some systems are used well, others are less effective. For

example, staff are not successfully gaining the views of children following physical interventions. House meetings take place regularly. However, records do not confirm what action has been taken in response to children's suggestions. This does not provide children with confidence that their views and opinions voiced in this forum will be responded to by members of staff.

In many regards, children's behaviour is managed well. To promote positive behaviour, children can earn 'merits' which have a cash value. A small number of children choose to save their financial rewards to purchase personal items, such as clothes. Most children use their credits to purchase tuck from the shop, which is opened twice a week. However, sanctions imposed for unwanted behaviour frequently result in a tuck shop ban. These sanctions are not restorative and they do not relate to the behaviour. This is a missed opportunity to use restorative practice and for children to learn to address behaviour issues positively.

The home has a well-established complaints procedure. The children are confident to raise complaints. All complaints are thoroughly investigated by the management team, and the children are informed verbally and in writing of the outcome. This helps children to feel that their complaints have been suitably investigated and resolved.

Children are provided with a healthy, balanced and nutritious diet. Menus are varied and provide the children with choice. Children benefit from being able to try new foods and to eat meals that broaden their diet and personal preferences.

Healthcare provision is improving, and the service delivered by the Health and Well-being Team meets the needs of the current population.

Staffing levels in the Health and Well-being Team have recently improved at manager and practitioner level, partly due to increased funding for SECURE STAIRS (an integrated care framework that addresses the needs of children and young people in secure settings).

Children generally receive a prompt review of their health needs through a comprehensive health assessment tool (CHAT) assessment. This assessment informs the child's ongoing care, and a related care plan is reviewed and updated frequently.

Children have good access to age-appropriate physical health services, and the nurse supports children with their immediate physical health needs. Children can access a broad range of health services in the community, including dental care, and visiting specialists, including an optician, visit the home regularly.

A small clinical room, which is used for minor treatments and storing medicines, is adequate and visibly clean. However, a formal infection prevention control audit is required to ensure that the environment complies with current infection prevention control standards.

Medicines are administered safely to children by appropriately trained care staff but

recording of stock requires more consistency.

Professionals who contributed to the inspection spoke positively of the services and quality of care provided to the children. They said that communication is good and the management team responds positively to feedback and requests. They were extremely complimentary about how well the staff manage the children's behaviour and commended their resilience.

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

During the inspection, a review of safeguarding information identified that there had been two incidents that highlighted deficits in staff supervision of children. These raised concerns about the potential risk of harm to children.

Managers recognised that there had been a near miss. A learning lessons exercise was undertaken and recommendations from this, including staff development needs, were actioned.

Despite the serious nature of this near miss, managers did not complete relevant notifications to HMCI and placing local authorities. In addition, individual work to assess children feeling safe and to provide reassuring and positive feedback to the children was not completed.

There are strengths in safeguarding practice within the home. The shared knowledge and understanding of children's complex needs and vulnerabilities supports staff to keep children safe and to work with children to keep themselves safe.

Staff work with the on-site multi-disciplinary teams, as well as external professionals, to undertake an initial assessment of risk that is continuously revisited and updated. Risk assessments identify behaviour and triggers and provide informed advice to staff to manage and prevent risks.

There are good systems and processes in place to support the sharing of information: twice daily handovers of information within the staff groups, multi-disciplinary planning and therapeutic (formulation) meetings. This means that all members of staff have up-to-date information and advice to keep children safe.

Managers review every incident of physical restraint, including the records of the incident and closed-circuit television (CCTV). They identify positive practice, effective de-escalation techniques and where there may be development needs for staff such as refresher training. They share concerns with safeguarding agencies if they need to.

Some children have risks associated with a range of self-harming behaviours. Clear advice to support staff to respond sensitively to keep children safe is included in the individual risk assessment plans. There are also detailed monitoring forms that staff complete so that patterns of harm, and any increase in risk, are identified and responded

to promptly. Records demonstrate a good multi-agency response. Where incidents are not reducing, managers are appropriately requesting multi-disciplinary meetings and reviews of care plans. This ensures a responsive and flexible approach, which includes all relevant staff.

A review of the use of single separations evidences that procedures and guidance are followed by staff. For one child with highly complex needs, who presents a range of challenges, the use of single separations has reduced. There has been an increase in the use of managing away, which demonstrates that staff are using the least intrusive method to intervene effectively and to decrease risk and disruption to others.

A review of the recording of 'managing away' incidents did highlighted shortfalls. On two occasions, a target had been set for a child that was unachievable until a certain time of the day. After discussing this with managers, it was clear that these were recording errors and there had been no negative impact on the child involved.

Searches are carried out routinely as well as based on intelligence and potential risk. Routine searches may be unnecessarily invasive if a child is not seen to be at risk and yet has their belongings searched.

There are safe recruitment procedures and practice in place. Managers have identified safe recruitment training to consolidate knowledge and practice. Managers are also reviewing processes to support the recruitment of resilient staff.

The local authority designated officer reported that there is a good working relationship with the home and that referrals and advice sought are appropriate and timely.

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

The registered manager and staff team work very hard to support the children they care for. They are dogged in their determination to provide a nurturing and structured environment and to make considerable efforts to help children to move forward.

There are numerous changes and challenges occurring in the home at the same time. A number of staff are newly recruited, there is a major refurbishment taking place and behaviour exhibited by children has at times been very challenging. This places pressure on managers and staff and there have been missed opportunities to thoroughly examine practice and to share information with partners. The standard of monitoring and quality assurance of records is lacking in depth. Some clear shortfalls in some records such as sanctions and incidents of single separation have not been identified or rectified despite managers reviewing them.

Managers have acknowledged these shortfalls and the ongoing challenges and have plans in place to address them. These plans have not yet had time to prove effective or to be consolidated.

At the monitoring visit in August, shortfalls were identified in the quality of supervision

records. These have significantly improved, and members of staff now have the opportunity to discuss how working in this challenging environment impacts on their feelings and actions. There is now better recording of these reflective sessions. Importantly, members of staff report very good support from managers and senior staff. This is crucial during this turbulent time.

New members of staff have a good induction process and all members of staff receive varied training opportunities, which keep them up to date with current issues such as county lines and their duties regarding identifying and reporting extremism.

Managers advocate strongly on behalf of children if they feel that placing authorities are not fulfilling their responsibilities. This is particularly evident in ensuring that transition plans are clarified at the earliest opportunity so that children are prepared sufficiently and their anxieties during this time are assuaged.

Decor and cleanliness in the home are considerably improved since the monitoring visit in August. This means that the environment is now more welcoming and comfortable. Managers also ensure that the security of the premises is suitably maintained.

Outcomes in education and related learning activities: good

Effective action has been taken by leaders and managers to strengthen teaching and learning in core subject areas and to improve monitoring and tracking systems.

Staff ensure that children settle quickly into school, where a comprehensive initial assessment is made at the start of their stay to check their levels of ability. This information is used well to set appropriate and challenging education targets. The failure of some local authorities to provide information about a child's education background means that any previous diagnostic assessments such as education, health and care plans (EHC plans) are not always available to inform planning. This is a recurring frustration, which is further exacerbated by the lack of a special educational needs coordinator to pursue such information and to plan bespoke learning interventions for those children with additional learning needs.

The curriculum has been extended to broaden the offer to children. Core subjects of English, mathematics and science are augmented with art, food technology, physical education and PSHE. Hair and beauty and hospitality and catering subjects have extended the vocational programme, which remains quite narrow. However, both subjects are popular, and children are developing some useful work-related and independent skills. A local theatre company offers optional drama and music workshops, which children enjoy. Access to ICT is limited and currently children are unable to achieve a formal accreditation. Too little is done to promote children's literacy skills.

Most children make good progress in relation to their age and starting points. They leave with appropriate accredited qualifications across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics, and some vocational areas. Relationships between staff and children are very good. Children enjoy their time in education and they are encouraged to voice

their views with staff. They generally behave well, participate fully and work safely. When erratic and risky behaviours do occur, these are managed swiftly to minimise disruption. Attendance overall is good. However, recent levels of unauthorised absences and refusals by a minority of children have increased.

The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning are good. Quality assurance procedures such as regular lesson observations and learning walks are ensuring consistency and improvement in teaching. Teachers plan well and use resources creatively to keep children motivated and on task. Topical equality and diversity themes are frequently introduced to stimulate children's interests and discussion. They take pride in their work and teachers ensure that it is regularly marked, providing helpful and encouraging comments. Their files are very well organised, and work is routinely show-cased across the home. Learning support assistants (LSAs) provide very good support to children and teachers in education and during enrichment programmes. They are skilled, responsive and resourceful.

Management information systems have improved significantly. A bespoke system now captures a range of data, including attendance, behaviour and rewards. Monitoring and tracking systems are now used effectively to analyse trends in performance and attainment for individual children and groups.

Children receive careers interviews prior to leaving and each child has an action plan for transition. Staff work hard to support children back into school, college or training when they leave. Destinations, when achieved, are tracked and records show good outcomes over the past year where children have sustained their placements.

The management of education is good. Quality improvement and performance management arrangements have developed well since the last inspection. Staff are motivated and hard working. They receive regular, focused supervision and access to external training. Networking is beginning to demonstrate good development, particularly in the core subjects. Local authority managers ensure good professional support to the headteacher, who in turn provides steady and positive leadership for his team. He advocates effectively for education and the broader well-being of children across the home.

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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC038719

Provision sub-type: Secure unit

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Registered provider address: Hampshire Council, The Castle, Winchester, Hampshire
SO23 8UG

Responsible individual: Amber James

Registered manager: Sophia Mathias

Inspector(s)

Paul Taylor: social care inspector

Sharron Escott: social care inspector

Stella Butler: social care inspector

Cathey Moriarty: social care inspector

Tim Byrom: CQC Health and Justice inspector

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