

# SC032163

Registered provider: Dorset County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is run by a local authority. The home is registered to accommodate up to nine children who have complex learning difficulties and disabilities.

The home provides long-term placements for children in accommodation that comprises four distinct living areas located in the main building. The occupancy levels of each living area are determined by the needs and the mix of the children.

The registered manager has been registered with Ofsted since 2007.

**Inspection dates:** 15 to 16 January 2019

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account	<b>requires improvement to be good</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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:** 8 November 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/11/2017	Full	Good
06/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22/11/2016	Full	Outstanding
10/11/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

## 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>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person should enable, inspire and lead a culture in relation to the children's home that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to:</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p> <p>(Regulation 13 (2)(a)(h))</p> <p>In particular, scrutinise and evaluate records relating to body maps, restraint records and behavioural incidents effectively.</p>	29/03/2019
<p>25: Fire precautions</p> <p>If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home—</p> <p>the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home.</p> <p>Ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that each child living at the home engages in a fire evacuation. (Regulation 25 (1)(d)(2)(b))</p> <p>In addition, ensure that visual fire alarms are fitted for children</p>	29/03/2019

who are deaf.	
<p>35: Behaviour management policies and records</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>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—</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>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')—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(vii)(b)(i)(ii))</p>	29/03/2019

## Recommendations

- 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)
- The registered manager must ensure that staff refresh mandatory training courses within the correct time scales. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- Ensure that systems are in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs and experiences of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.02)

## Inspection judgements

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

This home requires improvement because leaders and managers do not keep detailed records of the use of restraint or of the times when children have unexplained injuries and bruises. While leaders and managers were able to tell the inspector what action the staff take to respond to unexplained injuries, the lack of detailed recording reduces the ability of leaders and managers and that of the regulator to assess the quality and appropriateness of this action. Leaders and managers stated that they work in partnership with safeguarding agencies and families in relation to unexplained injuries.

Staff seek children's views well by using a range of communication aids to enable children to make choices in the activities they would like to do and the food and drinks they would like. Children's independence skills are promoted well because they are provided with the appropriate equipment to assist with their eating and drinking and because of the support by staff to help them to make progress.

Children are happy at this home. Children particularly enjoy activities that are of a special interest to them. These include sensory play, walking and swimming. Children continue to receive good-quality direct care from staff who have the skills to develop positive and trusted relationships with them. The inspector observed care staff responding to the children confidently, providing reassurance and nurturing care and support. These approaches help to reduce children's anxieties and worries.

Parents, social workers and independent reviewing officers were unanimously complimentary about the quality of care and services provided by the registered manager and staff. A parent told the inspector, 'My child is happy. The staff are amazing; they know my child well. I have confidence that he is safe and well cared for.' An independent reviewing officer agreed and said, 'I have nothing but praise and admiration for the staff. They know the children well and their natural response to children's changing mood is remarkable. They work inclusively and always look at ways to help children progress.'

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

Overall, children's behaviour is managed well. The use of physical intervention is reducing in frequency, as is the length of time when a child is held. Most interventions used have been to guide children and redirect them away from harm. However, records relating to these interventions are not well maintained. Some lack clear and concise information and other records are illegible. In addition, records do not demonstrate that discussions have taken place with children or staff following the use of an intervention. This does not provide children with an opportunity to share how they felt or provide staff with the opportunity to reflect on what happened and learn from their practice.

Leaders and managers ensure that there is regular testing of the home's fire protection systems. All children are provided with one-to-one care and support and have a personal evacuation escape plan. However, records show that children do not take part in fire evacuation drills. This means that staff do not know precisely how each child may respond in the event of a fire. In addition, leaders and managers have not ensured that a visual fire alarm system is fitted for one child who is profoundly deaf.

Leaders and managers have introduced improved systems to manage medication. Staff are familiar with a new medication policy. Medication audits are effective and undertaken frequently. Medication errors have reduced significantly. The small number of errors that have been identified have been rectified swiftly. Since the last inspection, two children have been supported by staff to administer their own medication. The inspector observed one child being able to name each medication and explain what the medication was for. This good work is helping the child to develop the skills for adult life.

Leaders and managers ensure that they communicate safeguarding matters to safeguarding agencies and other professionals effectively. There have been two referrals made appropriately to the designated officer since the previous inspection. Records of concerns shared with the designated officer are well maintained and confirm that appropriate action has been taken.

Since the last inspection, there have been no sanctions imposed, no missing from home incidents and no complaints.

Children are safeguarded by an effective recruitment and selection process. Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have successfully recruited and inducted 12 new members of staff.

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

Monitoring by the registered manager and the independent visitor requires improvement to be good. They have not identified or rectified weaknesses in records completed by staff. Several important records contain omissions, and they do not consistently confirm that parents or social workers have been informed about unexplained injuries. In addition, the registered manager has failed to monitor the central record of physical interventions for effectiveness and factual accuracy. To date, these shortfalls have not had a negative impact on the safety and well-being of children, but they do have the potential to do so.

The care staff spoken to said that the support they receive and the training opportunities they are provided with are good. Despite this feedback, a small number of staff have not completed refresher mandatory training courses. In addition, not all staff are provided with specialist training in supporting children who have autism spectrum disorders. As a result, staff are not provided with sufficient information that enables them to have a good understanding of the children's diagnosed needs.

Leaders and managers have introduced forums for staff to meet as individual teams as well

as a larger staff group. Records of these meetings detail discussions about the children and their current needs and behaviours. Staff now receive regular formal supervision. However, supervision records do not show that there is a focus in these meetings specifically on the member of staff's role and responsibilities. Neither do they confirm that staff reflect on their practice.

Leaders and managers have produced a development plan and are aware of some of the shortfalls that have been identified at this inspection. The registered manager took immediate action and compiled a detailed plan describing the actions he proposes to take in response.

The one requirement and the three recommendations made at the last inspection have not been met. In addition, two new requirements have been raised.

## **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:** SC032163

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

**Registered provider address:** County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

**Responsible individual:** Paula Bates

**Registered manager:** James Collins

## Inspector

Sharron Escott, social care inspector



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