

1258343

Registered provider: New Forest Care Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a private organisation and is registered for four children. The statement of purpose states that this home specialises in short-term emergency placements for children who have complex emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Care and accommodation are provided for an average of 90 days. This children's home operates across multiple locations using a range of different types of accommodation such as tents, mobile homes, and holiday lodges. The registered manager is suitably qualified and has been in post since September 2017.

Inspection date: 4 February 2019

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 2 October 2018

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 sustained effectiveness.

Since the previous inspection, the statement of purpose has changed significantly. Leaders and managers describe this service as 'crisis care'. This home is the second children's home that the provider operates in this way. Children come to stay here for up to 90 days. Arrival at this home is often in an emergency, due to children's current care arrangements having reached crisis point, and an alternative is required. The aim is for the local authority to identify a more permanent placement for children within, or at the

end of, 90 days. At the time of this inspection, one child has lived here for more than three months and is waiting for an alternative home to move to.

Two children have moved from this home since the previous inspection, with a positive farewell. After living here for over a year, one child has grown in confidence, matured in his personal development and successfully achieved a place at college. This progress has led to him moving into a flat, in the local community, with reduced adult support. Another child benefited from a short stay at this home, where he was able to gain weight to improve his overall health. In addition, he did not put himself at risk by going missing from this home. Missing from care was a serious safeguarding concern for this child prior to moving here.

Three children are currently cared for; two are residing at the house and one child is staying with staff in temporary accommodation such as a holiday lodge or an activity centre. Due to the short length of stay, education is not always possible unless children can continue with their previous school. The provider operates a school for some children to attend. Alternatively, an activity programme is delivered through an outdoor learning centre and a forest school. For example, children are attending pottery classes, making jewellery, horse riding and visiting a science museum.

Leaders and managers draw on the resources within the organisation to assist with children's emotional well-being. For example, children can receive support from a therapist, a mental health nurse and a consultant psychologist. Given that the children's plans are to stay here for a short time, ready access to such professionals ensures that children can receive this level of emotional support without delay.

Staffing levels are high, mostly with two staff to care for each child. As a result, the opportunities to go missing are reduced and this has made a significant difference to one child. Prior to living here, numerous incidents of going missing have put this child at risk of harm and exploitation. On one occasion the child went missing from the care of the staff, and twice when visiting family members. When children go missing, procedures are followed well, and staff work in partnership with other agencies to ensure their safe return.

At times when children are harming themselves or others, they are restrained by staff. A high level of assaults on staff has led to numerous restraints for one child. Sometimes this has resulted in the child being restrained on the floor. Records provide details as to how these restrictive interventions are used and how the frequency of their use is reducing. The manager reviews each incident thoroughly to consider how behaviour management can be more effective and less restrictive. A new form for staff to complete enables them to reflect on any use of de-escalation and restraint, providing an opportunity to explore whether a different approach can be used next time.

Leaders and managers respond appropriately to allegations, reporting promptly to safeguarding agencies. In response to several allegations made against some members of staff, a joint protocol has been written. Such a protocol ensures that children are listened to and that staff do not put themselves at risk of allegation, for example by

working alone.

Children are supported to maintain contact with family and friends, when it is safe to do so. Following a family breakdown in trust, the manager maintained weekly contact with an interested relative and supported the child to re-establish their relationship. This has resulted in building a positive connection with their family to the extent that overnight stays now occur.

The registered manager closely monitors care practices to ensure that children receive appropriate responses from staff and benefit from good-quality care. Every three months, the manager reviews the function of the home and any progress or concerns. A written report captures this review to meet regulation 45 of the children's home regulations. In response to a recommendation from the last inspection, the manager identifies action points from the review towards the overall development plan of the home.

The one requirement from the last inspection has been met. The quality of the independent person's report has improved by avoiding the use of acronyms. However, greater clarity is still required with regard to any recommended actions. An imminent change of independent person is expected to include a revision of the format used when reporting to meet regulation 44 of the children's homes regulations.

Recommendations for the manager to complete safer recruitment training, and to include actions for staff within their supervision, are both met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/10/2018	Full	Good
12/02/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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

Recommendations

- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the homes care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)
In particular, ensure that any recommended actions have timescales for completion and that they are reviewed and reported on during the following month.

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: 1258343

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: New Forest Care Limited

Registered provider address: West Shore House, West Street, Hythe, Southampton SO45 6AA

Responsible individual: Michael Ferne

Registered manager: Gary Macarthur

Inspector

Clare Davies, social care inspector

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