

# 1246449

Registered provider: New Forest Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home was registered in February 2017. It is registered to provide care for up to five children. The home offers short stays (usually of around three months) for children in crisis. The home is based in a semi-rural location and uses a variety of settings (for example, lodges and caravans) which children may stay in or move between during their time there.

The manager was registered with Ofsted on 7 March 2019.

**Inspection dates:** 7 to 8 May 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:** 29 August 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/08/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28/06/2017	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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment;</p> <p>promote opportunities for each child to learn informally;</p> <p>raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority;</p> <p>help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible;</p> <p>help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment; and</p> <p>that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning.</p> <p>(Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(i)(iv)(v)(vii)(viii)(ix)(b))</p>	01/09/2019

<p>The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to–  understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;  demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on–  feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and  use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.  (Regulation 13 (2)(f)(g)(ii)(h))</p>	<p>01/09/2019</p>
<p>The care planning standard is that children–  receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and  have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure–  that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home’s statement of purpose.  (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a))</p>	<p>01/09/2019</p>

## Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day to day basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. The Statement of Purpose is an important document in the process of care planning as it sets out the needs of children the home is set up and equipped to care for. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)



## Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a good understanding and knowledge of the young people in their care. They form positive relationships with young people through their positive approach and the daily programme of adventure activities.

Staff support and encourage young people to take part in all activities, some of which are new to them. Staff ensure that they are alongside young people doing activities. This enables staff to quickly form relationships with young people through their shared experiences. Staff conduct reviews with young people by exploring and preparing each young person for the next stage of their life, but they do not always clarify the individual aims and targets for each young person to work towards or evidence sufficiently the progress that young people make.

Young people are supported by staff to maintain their relationships with family and friends. However, records do not evidence that staff have thoroughly explored all known historical and current risk factors to ensure that young people's welfare is promoted when they spend unsupervised time with family members.

Most young people are not in education when they arrive at the home. Staff offer young people daily planned activities, and most young people join in with these, but the programme does not amount to 25 hours of education. Staff do not ensure that they use all opportunities to promote and encourage young people to develop and fulfil their academic potential. They follow activity timetables, but these do not evidence that the young people are sufficiently stretched to enable them to achieve all that they are capable of. Staff do not always match young people's activities to their educational abilities and achievements.

Staff support young people to address their health needs, seeking guidance and intervention, when needed, from a variety of medical professionals. Staff have open and helpful conversations with young people to explore and understand medical advice to ensure that young people know what it means. They are clear, calm and positive with young people, supporting them to manage and explore their emotions, anxieties and feelings. The medication records viewed were not up to date and did not include enough detail about why a young person had refused medication or what staff were doing about this.

Young people are actively involved in making decisions about their day-to-day care, activities, meals and other matters that affect them. Young people are informed about how to raise a concern or make a complaint. When young people raise a concern, managers write to them explaining the outcome.

Staff support young people to explore, develop and express their identity. They guide and inform young people about the wishes and hopes of their parents regarding young

people's cultural and religious beliefs, alongside supporting young people to make their own decisions and choices.

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

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of risk factors. They know what is needed to support each young person to stay safe. In practice, they support young people through firm boundaries that promote a positive sense of security. However, the support plans that staff follow lack detail, information, clarity and consideration of all known risks and needs. They do not provide sufficient detail to enable someone who is less familiar with the young people to fully understand what they should do to proactively respond to and minimise risk.

Although, overall, managers can clearly explain why they decide that the home would be an appropriate match for individual young people, they do not record or evidence that a young person's needs and risks are thoroughly considered prior to them arriving at the home. Records do not evidence why managers decide that the home can meet each young person's needs or that the young person's needs are compatible with staff skills and that they will get on with other young people living at the home. The process that managers currently follow is to hold a meeting, but accounts of these meetings are not available in the young person's record. Plans do not detail all aspects of the young person's current needs or involvement with other agencies. Staff did not sufficiently consider all known information to ensure that they could meet one young person's needs, as they conducted this process two weeks after the young person arrived.

Leaders and managers have responded well to safeguarding concerns and allegations, with prompt reporting and referral to other safeguarding agencies. Managers maintain records and chronologies that detail actions and outcomes. Internal investigations provide clarity of reasons and rationale for the outcome. Allegation action plans and risk assessments are created, although one did not evidence that the actions identified had been undertaken.

Through a coordinated approach with other professionals, staff have responded well to episodes of young people going missing. Records of these episodes are detailed, with clarity about what actions were taken and the attempts made by staff to locate and contact the young person. However, the written plans that staff are to follow are not explicit or detailed enough in relation to what they should do to seek, locate and return young people. Although staff understand their respective roles and responsibilities, not all are familiar with the 'return-home interview' process for each young person.

Managers and staff have reviewed the processes and systems that they follow to plan and oversee the support provided to young people to manage their behaviour. The changes made have led to improved records of incidents, but some still lack sufficient quality of information to enable others to fully understand the events that have occurred. The post-incident reviews that are undertaken by staff evidence that staff reflect on their actions and their effectiveness and include what they might do differently

if an event was to occur again. After incidents have occurred, young people speak with staff about the cause and how they feel about the incident. The records of these conversations provide insightful information and, in practice, staff reflect on what has happened. However, managers' review of these incidents lacks challenge, evaluation or identification of any actions that are needed to improve staff practice in future to support young people better. Staff do not routinely use sanctions or restrictions to manage young people's behaviour.

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

The manager of the home was registered in March 2019. He has implemented some changes which have had a positive impact on the home, demonstrating an ability to make improvements. However, he has not systematically identified or addressed all the shortfalls and weaknesses in the home. He does not use reviews of the home to inform and develop a realistic development plan that states how previous requirements and recommendations will be addressed. The existing development plan does not specify weaknesses or include an action plan with timescales to address these. The monitoring and evaluation systems that managers use are not sufficiently thorough or effective. For example, managers have not used their review of incidents to inform the development of staff practice or the overall plan for improving the home.

Some of the young people's plans and records have not been kept up to date. In practice, staff demonstrate a good understanding of young people's current needs, but the records do not always describe this knowledge and are not always updated quickly enough when circumstances change. The manager routinely shares new information about young people with staff about young people, but this is not always detailed in their written plans. This may reduce the ability of new staff to fully understand and meet young people's needs.

All staff access regular effective supervision and their practice is appraised at least annually, although during the inspection the manager was absent and some documents were not available. These were provided on the manager's return. Team meetings are informative and beneficial to staff, but they do not happen often enough. The meetings provide information and education about specific topics and contribute to the development and support of staff in their roles. Staff all access the core training programme and all have achieved the required qualification. Staff also use other opportunities to reflect on their practice and identify how and what they can do to improve and develop.

Managers ensure that there are sufficient employed staff to meet the needs of the young people, however it is predominantly a male team. There continues to be a high turnover of staff and there have been periods of high levels of absence. This has been well managed using staff from other homes in the organisation, limiting the impact on young people.

The recruitment of staff meets safer recruitment standards, although the rationale for



appointing new staff and the extent to which the staff are judged to possess the right skills and experience to work in the home is not well evidenced in recruitment records. This is because managers have not fully implemented their internal grading system in the interview selection process. In the records reviewed, any scoring of candidates' skills and experience was largely absent, making it difficult to see how managers had reached the conclusion that the candidate was deemed to be suitable.

## **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 difference 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:** 1246449

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

**Registered provider:** New Forest Care Ltd

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

**Responsible individual:** Michael Ferne

**Registered manager:** Marcus Lange

## Inspectors

Amanda Maxwell, social care inspector

John Pledger, social care inspector

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