

# 1244426

Registered provider: Oxfordshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to six children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home provides short-term care and accommodation on a shared-care basis for a period of assessment.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in February 2017.

**Inspection dates:** 31 July to 1 August 2019

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,** taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 13 March 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/03/2019	Full	Good
06/12/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
28/11/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be 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 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 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>	30 September 2019
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform.</p> <p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma").</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a</p>	30 September 2019

home. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(b)(4)(a)(5)(a))	
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## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are helped to build strong relationships with staff. Children spoke highly of the staff and the bonds that they develop with them. Staff care about the children and place children's welfare at the top of their agenda. Staff know the children well and treat them with dignity and respect.

Children have access to an advocacy service. Children are listened to and their views are taken seriously. Children attend reviews, when appropriate, and feel heard.

Children make good progress in education, including those children who arrived with a history of not attending school. This is because staff place high importance on education, and support children to attend their education placements regularly.

Activities are in place that support children's development and broaden their horizons. For example, one child is currently attending a sailing course which is helping improve their confidence and also gaining them qualifications.

Independence is promoted by staff. Children are supported to complete tasks such as cooking, independent travel and cleaning, to give them the skills they will need in the future.

Admissions are planned effectively. Children visit the home before they stay, and get to know the staff team. This often follows a process of community-based work through which the staff have got to know the child and their family.

Children are provided with good-quality, nutritious meals. The environment offers a safe, comfortable and homely space for children to relax and feel at home in.

## **How well children and young people are helped and protected: good**

Children's associated risks are understood by staff, and children feel safe. Professionals and parents also reported that children are safe and well looked after. Risk assessments are in place and reviewed regularly. They contain guidance for staff on how to keep children safe in specific situations.

Missing-from-home episodes are significantly reduced from pre-admission levels; this is also reported by professionals and parents. When missing-from-home incidents do occur, the response by the home is robust, overall. However, there has been one occasion where a parent was not informed of a period of missing within a timely way. However, this has been addressed with the parent, who is happy with the overall response. Appropriate procedures are followed and referrals are made when child protection concerns are raised.

Boundaries are clear and staff work consistently with children. Staff know what steps to take to de-escalate incidents of challenging behaviour. However, room searches are not consistently well managed. This led to an incident with a child that might possibly have been avoided if the correct plans had been followed.

Recruitment procedures follow safer recruitment principles, meaning that managers do all that they can to ensure that only staff deemed safe and appropriate are able to work in the home.

The physical environment is clean, welcoming and well maintained and free from any avoidable hazards.

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

Plans for children take account of children's individual needs and detail effective ways for staff to work with them. However, individual records are not always easy to access. A better organised approach to record keeping would allow for specific records to be more accessible when they are required.

The registered manager challenges appropriately when she feels that decisions are not being made in a child's best interests. There are many examples of where this has led to positive results for children.

Staff induction processes are good. However, there have been occasions where the appropriate level 3 qualification has not been accessed and completed within regulatory timescales. This is essential for ensuring that staff have the appropriate knowledge for working in the home. Training needs are not assessed frequently enough. Training in areas such as working with children at risk of child sexual exploitation and self-harming behaviours is not always refreshed or kept up to date.

There have been shortfalls in the monitoring and review processes that are in place in

the home. An example of this is where unauthorised room searches were taking place over a long period of time before this was identified and rectified by managers.

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for one member of staff had expired under the Oxfordshire County Council policy of being renewed every three years. Although there is a comprehensive risk assessment in place to allow this member of staff to continue their duties, it is not being followed and the content of this risk assessment was not fully known by the registered manager.

There have been a number of medication recording errors since the last inspection. These errors were noticed and rectified in good time by leaders and managers and have been addressed by managers in follow-up supervision sessions with staff.

## **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:** 1244426

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

**Registered provider:** Oxfordshire County Council,

**Registered provider address:** County Hall, New Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX1 1ND

**Responsible individual:** Daniel Ruaux

**Registered manager:** Sandra Curley

## Inspector

Daniel Healy, social care inspector

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