

SC066129

Registered provider: Fairport Care Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five children. The statement of purpose states that the home accommodates children aged eight to 18 who are deemed to require help in a residential specialist resource.

The manager has been in post since February 2019 and has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 30 to 31 July 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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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: 15 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
15/08/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/05/2018	Full	Inadequate
14/11/2017	Full	Good
30/03/2017	Interim	Sustained 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>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour;</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding;</p> <p>communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 11 (1)(b)(iii)(v))</p>	30/09/2019
<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 staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child</p>	30/09/2019

protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(v)(iv)(vii))	
<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>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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(f))</p>	30/09/2019
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a))</p>	30/09/2019
<p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if—</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children. (Regulation 24(1)(a))</p> <p>Specifically, ensure that a risk assessment is in place for each child for whom a door alarm is used.</p>	30/09/2019
<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out—</p> <p>how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and</p> <p>the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.</p> <p>The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it.</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>	30/09/2019

<p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (2)(3)(vii))</p> <p>Specifically, review the behaviour policy and restraint records for the last inspection period. Ensure that the effectiveness is measured and that any practice issues are addressed.</p>	
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(b))</p> <p>Specifically, keep clear records of incidents and subsequent investigations.</p>	30/09/2019
<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> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>a child protection enquiry involving a child—</p> <p>is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(ii)(e))</p>	30/09/2019
<p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—</p> <p>children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.</p> <p>The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (4)(a)(b)(5))</p> <p>Specifically, ensure that actions are clear, and that progress against them is reviewed the following month and included in the report sent to Ofsted.</p>	30/09/2019

Inspection judgements

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

Frequent staff changes have hindered the children's ability to form long-term relationships with staff. However, a small core of staff remain who are well known to the children. These relationships were observed to be nurturing and warm.

Children's experiences of living at this home are variable. In one example, a child was matched to the home despite an escalating period of crisis. Their arrival at the home had a significant impact on the other children, which led to an increase in risk-taking behaviour and resulted in a placement ending with no notice.

Staff do not always communicate effectively with the children. Some staff have asked children unnecessary questions when they have been struggling with their behaviour. At times, staff have been focused on their own need for children to apologise, rather than supporting the child to resolve their behaviour. As a result, behaviour has escalated, and relationships between some staff and the children are fractured.

Some children are making progress. For example, despite having missed a significant amount of education prior to his arrival at the home, one child is now succeeding in education. Other children who were initially reluctant to try new things are experiencing a wide range of meaningful activities, through which their resilience and identity are being developed.

Children are encouraged to participate in the community. They are largely engaged in local social and sporting groups, where they are learning social skills and enjoying pastimes that foster social relationships.

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

Night-time arrangements have not kept children safe. On one occasion, staff sleeping in failed to ensure that the door alarm system was working correctly. They awoke to find that all the children had been able to leave the home during the night without the staff's knowledge. The children were subsequently found by the police and two were returned to the home. This event resulted in the ending of one child's placement.

During the inspection, the responsible individual revised the night-time arrangements to ensure that sufficient staffing and protocols were in place. This action was prompted by the inspector.

Use of physical intervention has been high. Leaders and managers have failed to analyse records and identify ways in which it could be reduced. Some children have made complaints regarding physical intervention. Not all of these complaints have been reported to the designated officer. This insular practice exacerbates the risks to vulnerable children.

The home's behaviour management guidance is not consistently understood by staff. Their expectations have not demonstrated that they fully understand the children's needs. At times, the police have been called to the home unnecessarily by less-confident staff. However, some staff have exceptional success in supporting the

children. These staff are highly skilled and attuned to the children's needs, knowing when to intervene and when to step back and allow children the space they need to manage their feelings. Consequently, behaviour management practice is inconsistent.

Written risk assessments are lengthy, generic and do not fully address the specific vulnerabilities of individual children. This means that staff do not have clear written guidance or effective strategies to reduce risks. Door alarms are used routinely for all children and there are no risk assessments in place to explain why this level of monitoring and surveillance is necessary for each child.

Records are variable in quality. Some provide a clear, factual account. Others lack key information, contain irrelevant detail and reflect staff's personal opinions rather than evidenced-based assessments.

The physical environment of the home is well maintained. Recent changes in the use of the building have given children more spaces to relax in, as they now have two lounge areas. The recent redecoration of the lounges and dining area creates a bright and homely feel. Improvements to the front and rear garden, with new fences and gates, have also improved the security of the home.

Routine servicing of equipment further ensures that the premises are safe. Fire precautions are well understood by the children and staff. The children's rooms are all decorated to their individual tastes and are clean and well furnished. Consequently, apart from the concerns about night-time security mentioned earlier in this report, this home provides a safe space for the children, in which they can relax.

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

The provider does not currently have a registered manager. The acting manager has worked for the organisation for a number of years. She is child-centred and is dedicated to establishing a consistent staff team.

The manager has used staff turnover as an opportunity to recruit a team that has the skills and attributes required to improve the quality of care at the home. Where staff practice falls short, she takes a supportive approach and uses clear goal-setting to give staff the opportunity to improve. Where staff have continued to underperform, clear disciplinary processes have been followed.

Internal investigations have at times been haphazard. Records do not follow a chronological process, and outcomes lack clear rationale. During the inspection, leaders and managers found it difficult to provide all the relevant documents. Consequently, the inspector could not evidence that all necessary actions had been taken to investigate and learn from incidents of concern.

Management monitoring systems are not effective. The manager failed to identify the shortfalls highlighted during this inspection. The independent visitor reports are lengthy. They fail to provide a clear safeguarding statement and contain little analysis. The independent visitor does not identify clear actions to improve the service. The reports do not provide leaders and managers with a useful tool to bring about improvement.

Staff morale has significantly improved. All staff spoken to by the inspector were

positive about their work and the support that they receive from leaders and managers. Some staff have been promoted to senior roles. This is good evidence of progression planning within the organisation.

Leaders and managers are determined to establish a new and improved culture at this home. Frequent staff meetings and regular supervisions ensure that staff are well informed of the plans of leaders and managers, and have clear goals to improve the quality of care provided to children.

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: SC066129

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Fairport Care Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Bank Chambers, 1 Central Avenue, Sittingbourne ME10 4AE

Responsible individual: Nicky Farrant-D-Wilson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Sarah Olliver, social care inspector

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