

SC031490

Registered provider: East Sussex County Council

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This secure children's home is operated by a local authority and is approved by the Secretary of State to restrict children's liberty. The home can accommodate up to seven children who are aged between 10 and 17. It provides for children accommodated under section 25 of the Children Act 1989, who are placed by local authorities.

Admission of any child who is under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State, under section 25 of the Children Act 1989.

The commissioning of health services in this home is the statutory responsibility of NHS England under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Education is provided on site in dedicated facilities.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since July 2017.

Inspection date: 12 November 2019

Judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Date of last inspection: 12 March 2019

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.

Managers and staff provide nurturing care, consistent routines and expectations, to

support children to settle and make progress in this home. Staff are considerate and empathetic, and children learn to value positive, healthy relationships with staff and with peers. Children enjoy meals together, participate in group activities and celebrate achievements.

Children are listened to. There have been no complaints, as children raise any concerns with staff and managers directly and receive a prompt response. Children contribute to their planning meetings and to their records.

At the last inspection, a recommendation regarding support for children's education was made. This will be assessed at the next inspection.

Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes in the group of children. Staff ensure that children are welcomed and have in place safe visiting and contact arrangements with family and professionals. Staff work closely with professionals, family and carers from the start, to ensure that children move on from the home in a planned way. One parent said that staff in the home are very good at sharing information, are 'brilliant at listening to the children', and that it is 'obvious that staff really [care] about what they do'.

The management team has developed and further improved the weekly multi-disciplinary team meetings when plans and progress for each child are considered. These support consistent care and a shared understanding of placement aims and capture actions for practitioners.

Managers refer safeguarding incidents to the relevant professionals and adhere to child protection procedures. There has been one allegation that was referred to the local authority designated person and assessed to be about staff conduct. This has concluded. Managers have reviewed the information in respect of learning that can be shared with the team.

There are low numbers of all forms of restrictive measures, including the use of physical restraint, that evidence staff use restorative practice, are able to identify triggers and de-escalate situations in most cases.

Inspectors found that there had been one incident of challenging behaviour by a child to which the response by the member of staff could have been improved. It did not de-escalate the child's behaviour but led to a protracted incident, and subsequently the child was separated in order to support her to keep herself safe. The manager was able to review this incident and use it for staff to reflect on. However, the records and audit trail were not as clear.

Generally, there are very good-quality assurance systems in place. The independent visitor reports are thorough, timely and child centred. The manager values the fact that the visits challenge practice and support continuous improvement.

Monthly quality assurance reports support the team to identify any emerging themes.

There is a safeguarding incident tracker which includes a rating by the manager of the level of seriousness. In this way, managers build an accurate picture of children's progress and of whether interventions are affecting positive change.

A focus for managers currently is the impact of building work that is taking place as a result of development plans for the home. The manager has been conscientious in monitoring progress and tenacious in mitigating the impact to children's daily lived experiences. This ensures that a safe environment is maintained and that children continue to have access to outside spaces and activities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/03/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
25/09/2018	Full	Good
13/02/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/07/2017	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Ensure that the ethos of the home supports each child to learn. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18)
Specifically, clarify and communicate to staff the policy and practice for supporting the education of those who do not attend school.
- Staff should understand factors that affect children's motivation to behave in a socially acceptable way. Staff should encourage an enthusiasm for positive behaviour through the use of positive behaviour strategies in line with the child's individual plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.13)

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: SC031490

Provision sub-type: Secure unit

Registered provider address: 175b Priory Road, Hastings, Sussex TN34 3JD

Responsible individual: Elizabeth Rugg

Registered manager: Helen Simmons

Inspectors

Cathey Moriarty, social care inspector
Cath Sikakana, social care inspector

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