

SC032163

Registered provider: Dorset County Council

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a local authority. The home is registered to accommodate up to nine children who have complex learning difficulties and disabilities.

The home provides long-term placements for children in accommodation that comprises four distinct living areas located in the main building. The occupancy levels of each living area are determined by the needs and the mix of the children.

The registered manager has been registered with Ofsted since 2007.

Inspection date: 10 February 2020

Date of last inspection: 21 August 2019

Judgement at last inspection: good

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.

Children continue to make good progress because they receive consistent care from staff who know them well and understand their individual needs. This includes the group of agency staff who are currently being used to provide additional support for one child. Leaders and managers have ensured that all staff, including agency staff, are safely recruited, have the appropriate training and skills to meet children's needs and receive good-quality supervision.

Children are more involved in their local community, taking part in more activities and clubs outside of the home. As a result, children can make friends with other young people, have fun and learn new skills such as swimming.

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the service. Through good-quality monitoring, which includes the analysis of feedback from parents, the leaders and managers continue to develop the service they provide. Current developments include the improvements being made to the children's play areas.

Safeguarding arrangements are good. Records of safeguarding events are of a good quality and include leaders and managers using lessons learned from these events to improve staff practice.

Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have improved the process to assess the potential risks the existing group of children may pose to a new child and how staff will mitigate this risk.

Overall, behaviour is well managed. There was an increase in incidents and restraints for one child, but because of effective co-working with other professionals these are now decreasing. Records of restraint are of a good quality, but the conversations with a child after they have been restrained are not consistently carried out by a member of staff not involved in the restraint. This could potentially inhibit a child from expressing how they feel about being restrained.

Leaders and managers are continuing to work on removing unnecessary health and safety and fire signs, which detract from the otherwise homely environment the staff have created.

The development of the locality assessment is ongoing as leaders and managers continue to work on this.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/08/2019	Full	Good
15/01/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/11/2017	Full	Good
06/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
In particular, review the necessity of health and safety signage around the home.
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them.
('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
In particular, improve the quality and scope of the location risk assessment.
- Any child who has been restrained should be given the opportunity to express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, ideally within 24 hours of the restraint incident, taking the age of the child and the circumstances of the restraint into account. In some cases children may need longer to work through their feelings, so a record that the child has talked about their feelings should be made no longer than 5 days after the incident of restraint (regulation 35(3)(c)). Children should be encouraged to add their views and comments to the record of restraint. Children should be offered the opportunity to access an advocacy support to help them with this (regulation 7(2)(b)(iii)). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 50 paragraph 9.60)
In particular, ensure that these conversations are carried out by a member of staff not involved in the restraint.

Information about this inspection

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.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: SC032163

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

Responsible individual: Paula Bates

Registered manager: James Collins

Inspector

Wendy Anderson, social care inspector

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