

1258343

New Forest Care

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately-operated children's home is one of a group of homes and educational premises located in the south of England. It is registered for up to four children who have experienced adverse childhood events that have led to associated trauma and complex behaviours.

The registered manager post is currently vacant.

Inspection date: 5 August 2020

This monitoring visit

This on-site inspection was undertaken because Ofsted received notifications about incidents of physical restraint, that included several complaints and allegations made by a child. Concerns have also been raised by a placing local authority, about the use of restraint on the ground, injuries to a child and the quality of care provided at this home.

During the inspection, children did not raise any concerns about living at this home with the inspector. Staff ensure the home is comfortable and children's bedrooms are well decorated and reflect the child's interests. Children were observed during this inspection cooking and playing with staff. However, the home is not as homely as it could be. Two toilets within the home are locked and kept for staff use. The office door is locked and children are not usually allowed in. Snacks and computer consoles are usually locked in the office.

The home is currently separated into two separate living areas because it is assessed by the provider that one child's behaviour poses a risk to others. During this inspection, it was shared with the inspector that the needs of one child cannot be met at this home. The responsible individual is planning to discuss this with the placing authority.

The inspector found that the use of restraint is not always necessary or proportionate. Currently, neither staff or managers consistently use strategies to de-escalate incidents effectively, and wherever possible avoid the use of restraint. The practice of holding children on the ground is not a proportionate response to the children's behaviour, age and understanding. This shortfall was previously found at the inspections in 2019. At that time, improvements were made and there was a reduction in the use of restraint. However, this has not been sustained. The responsible individual told the inspector he was aware that since May 2020 the use of restraint had increased in the home. He said that changes in staff, limited staff skills and the pandemic lockdown had impacted on this. The responsible individual was clear that he would take urgent action to address the concerns identified at this inspection.

During five incidents since May 2020, a 10-year-old child has been held on the ground by staff 18 times. Two of these incidents took place in the child's bedroom, with one incident being reported to have lasted for almost two hours and until late into the night.

Another child has made several complaints and/or allegations about being hurt or injured during incidents when restraint is used. In most cases, but not all, the concerns are reported to the designated officer. For example, the inspector identified two separate incidents where a child sustained injury during ground holds, and in one case the child alleged that staff, 'threw him on the ground'. Neither of these incidents was referred to the designated officer or notified to Ofsted as required. Consequently, children's safety is not being promoted due to inconsistent management oversight of incidents, and by not following statutory safeguarding procedures.

On one occasion, a child had been restrained on the ground by a staff member who had not received the appropriate training. This potentially unsafe practice was not identified by a manager despite the incident being reviewed.

Records of physical restraint are not easily accessible and disparity in data does not support effective review, monitoring or oversight. For example, records seen in the home show 26 incidents of ground hold restraint since May 2020. In reviewing the records sent to the inspector, 34 incidents were recorded. However, several restraints are recorded within one incident report. Therefore, the number of restraints used, including restraints on the ground, is higher than the initial data indicates.

The quality of several restraint records is poor. Some records lack important details about the holds used by staff, and others do not consistently record the time and duration of the restraint, injuries to children and whether medical treatment is provided. Managers' oversight has not identified and/or rectified these recording shortfalls.

Children's behaviour management plans and care plans do not provide detailed

information about children’s needs or how staff should manage the children’s behaviour. For example, they do not include information about children’s aggressive or self-harming behaviours including spitting and biting. One child’s behaviour plan and care plan state that ground holds are not to be used. Staff have not followed this guidance. Neither plans refer to the children’s cultural needs, ethnicity or identity. This lack of information and clear guidance for staff means that children’s needs are not being consistently met.

Management oversight of physical incidents and complaints made by children lacks reliable monitoring. Scrutiny of these areas is not consistently effective. Some managers fail to highlight patterns and shortfalls, and actions for follow up are not implemented quickly enough to prevent the same practice from being repeated. For example, in May 2020, a manager appropriately identified that a child should not be restrained in their bedroom and an alternative approach was recommended. However, the same child was again restrained in their bedroom in August 2020.

During this inspection, the number of complaints and allegations made by children could not be properly evaluated. Recording systems are disordered and do not clearly demonstrate the actions taken in response to allegations made by children, and the injuries they obtained during incidents.

Since the last inspection, this home has changed from providing short-term care to long-term care. Two managers have left, and there have been several staff changes. Managers have not ensured that Ofsted has received an up-to-date statement of purpose. This means that it is not clear how staff will be meeting the needs of children to provide consistent, good quality care.

Two compliance notices have been issued as a result of this inspection. Requirements under regulations 32 and 33 were issued at the last inspection and were not reviewed at this inspection. Ofsted will continue to monitor this home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/10/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
02/07/2019	Full	Inadequate
04/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/10/2018	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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>(a) understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>(b) use this understanding to deliver care that meets children’s needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>(a) understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>(b) ensure that staff—</p> <p>(i) understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>(iv) provide personalised care that meets each child’s needs, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans, taking account of the child’s background;</p> <p>(v) help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect;</p> <p>(vi) help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult; and</p> <p>(ix) make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child’s relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice.</p> <p>(Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(i)(iv)(v)(vi)(ix))</p>	<p>09/09/2020</p>
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p>	<p>09/09/2020</p>

<p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>(a) that staff—</p> <p>(v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>(vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and</p> <p>(vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(v)(vi) and (vii)) and ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’, 2018, page 67, paragraph 45)).</p>	
<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>(a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>(b) promotes their welfare.</p> <p>(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>(a) lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>(e) ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child;</p> <p>(f) 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;</p> <p>(g) demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—</p>	<p>09/09/2020</p>

<p>(i) research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and</p> <p>(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p> <p>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(e)(f)(g)(i)(h)) *</p>	
<p>The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1.</p> <p>(3) The registered person must—</p> <p>(a) keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>(b) notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision.</p> <p>(Regulation 16 (1)(3)(a)(b))</p>	09/09/2020
<p>Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing—</p> <p>(a) injury to any person (including the child);</p> <p>(b) serious damage to the property of any person (including the child); or</p> <p>(c) a child who is accommodated in a secure children's home from absconding from the home.</p> <p>(2) Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate.</p> <p>(Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)) *</p>	09/09/2020
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>(Regulation 32(1))</p>	30/11/2019
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>(a) undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>(b) receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience.</p>	30/11/2019

<p>(Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))</p>	
<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out—</p> <p>(a) how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and</p> <p>(b) the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.</p> <p>(2) The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it.</p> <p>(3) The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>(a) 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> <p>(i) the name of the child;</p> <p>(ii) details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>(iii) the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>(iv) a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>(v) details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>(vi) the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>(vii) the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>(viii) a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;</p> <p>(b) within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—</p>	<p>09/09/2020</p>

<p>(i) has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>(ii) has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>(c) within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.</p> <p>(Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b)(2)(3)(a)(i)(ii)(iv)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p>	
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>(a) a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;</p> <p>(b) an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>(c) there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>(d) a child protection enquiry involving a child—</p> <p>(i) is instigated; or</p> <p>(ii) concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or</p> <p>(e) there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.</p> <p>(Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))</p>	<p>09/09/2020</p>

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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)

This is with reference to the use of locked doors to toilets and the office as well as snacks and games consoles being locked in the office.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1258343

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: New Forest Care

Registered provider address: New Forest Care Ltd, West Shore House, West Street, Hythe, Southampton, Hampshire SO45 6AA

Responsible individual: David Carter

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Anna Gravelle, social care inspector

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