

# SC035500

Registered provider: South Gloucestershire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this secure children's home

This secure 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 24 children aged between 10 and 18 years.

All places available at the home are commissioned on a contractual basis by the Youth Custody Service (YCS). The YCS may under certain circumstances permit local authority children's services to spot purchase a vacant bed at the home, to enable a local authority to place a child on welfare grounds under section 25 of the Children Act 1989. Admission of any child aged under 13 under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 requires the approval of the Secretary of State.

The commissioning of health services at 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 registered with Ofsted in July 2015.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this home on 20 April 2021 to carry out a full inspection. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

### Inspection dates: 8 and 9 June 2021

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account	<b>good</b>
Children's education and learning	not judged
Children's health	not judged
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

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

**Date of last inspection:** 20 April 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** inadequate

**Enforcement action since last inspection:**

The home was judged inadequate at the full inspection on 20 April 2021. The inspection identified that there were serious failures that meant that the children were not protected. Ofsted served two compliance notices under Regulation 12 and Regulation 20

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
20/04/2021	Full	Inadequate
21/01/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
04/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/10/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

## Inspection judgements

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

At the last inspection, the home was judged inadequate, despite several areas of good practice. The significant concerns identified included the use of physical intervention for compliance, hazardous items in the grounds and a failure to report two safeguarding allegations to the designated officer and to Ofsted.

Suitable action has been taken to meet both of the compliance notices. External areas of the home are clear of hazards and no physical interventions have been undertaken for compliance reasons.

Outcomes for education, learning-related activities and health services have not been inspected at this visit. This is because at the previous inspection they were both judged good. Since the last inspection, eight children have been admitted and five children have been discharged.

Planned improvement works to the home regarding the children's bathrooms have been delayed. The manager is working closely with the building contractors. The improvement work for the new lounges and replacement of bedroom windows are progressing well. The management team and staff have begun work on the children's communal areas. However, the work is not yet completed and they remain unwelcoming.

The children are positive about their experiences of living at the home. They feel well supported and safe. The children have trusting relationships with the staff that allow them to explore their experiences and reflect on their behaviours in a non-judgemental environment.

There is a holistic approach to caring for children. Care, education and health staff work in a coordinated way to provide individualised care. This approach meets each child's needs, it reduces unhelpful behaviour and minimises risks. Children's plans are reviewed by the relevant staff at sentence review meetings. These meetings include detailed discussions that place the needs and best interests of the child at the heart of the conversation.

A great deal of importance is placed on ensuring that children contribute to their plans and understand them. A speech and language worker ensures that the information in children's plans is presented clearly. They also ensure that letters written to children by the manager are explained in children's meetings, to ensure that the children clearly understand the expectations.

The children have continued to maintain contact with their families despite restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The manager adapts visits in accordance with the restrictions in place at the time. The children confirmed that they have had visits from their families as the restrictions have lifted. The children's

increased access to make and receive telephone calls and video conferencing to maintain contact with those that are important to the children remains available. These differing forms of contact enable the children and their families to choose the way in which they communicate with each other.

Planning for children's resettlement is a strong area of practice. The planning starts at the point of admission and continues throughout each child's placement. This ensures that the relevant professionals are aware of their obligations to support the children as they move. Children benefit from the offer of outreach support when they leave the home. This support has been used to help children to settle and adapt to life in the community.

The Lodge provides a good environment to enable children to develop life skills. As the COVID-19 restrictions lift, the children have been able to access this area and one child has two overnight stays a week. This facility prepares the children for their return to the community. Other children develop practical life skills that include laundry, budgeting and cooking.

The children access and engage in a wide range of recreational activities. These include cooking, tennis, beauty treatments, board games, animal care, using the gym and playing football. These activities support children's interests and develop their skills.

The manager and staff listen to and seek the children's views through a variety of formats. In addition, the children are provided with a formal forum to raise and discuss their requests with the manager. The staff ensure that managers are informed of any concerns that the children have. However, in one case, a child raised concern about an external agency. The management team's response did not advocate strongly enough for the child.

**Children's education and learning:**

Not judged.

**Children's health:**

Not judged.

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

The children told the inspectors that they feel safe at the home. They spoke positively about the staff and are comfortable to talk to staff if they have any worries or concerns. These discussions demonstrate the skills of the staff team to support the children to feel at ease. These relationships reassure new children.

The manager and staff implement the home's safeguarding policies. There are some internal investigations being undertaken following safeguarding concerns and allegations. The manager has liaised with the designated officer and followed their advice. However, some of the advice provided is unclear in terms of the decision-making rationale. Although the manager has followed the home's procedure, the

manager has not sufficiently queried how the decision made thoroughly safeguards children.

The manager and staff are fully alert to potential risks of conflict and bullying behaviour and implement reduction strategies. When incidents of bullying do occur, the staff respond appropriately. The children receive emotional support from the staff and the home's health team.

The children's risk management plans clearly detail current changes in children's behaviour, their risks, vulnerabilities and emotional concerns. These documents provide informed strategies for managing risk-taking behaviours or concerns regarding a child's presentation. These include self-harm and suicidal ideation concerns. Strategies are clear, understood by the staff and put into practice. These strategies are swiftly reviewed following any incidents to keep the children safe.

Incidents of physical intervention continue to decrease as a result of good oversight and analysis, monitoring and lessons learned from review of closed-circuit television (CCTV) and records. The recognised holds are guided by trained staff and the records show that these are justified to ensure the children's and others' safety.

Single separation, which means locking a child into a room when they are a significant risk to themselves or others, is used appropriately. A recommendation made at the last inspection regarding ensuring that the criteria for a child remaining in single separation continue to be met throughout the incident is restated. This is because records still do not show that the rationale for single separation to continue is met, including the duty manager's agreement.

The use of sanctions continues to decrease. This is because the staff promote positive behaviour effectively. However, the recommendation made at the last inspection to meaningfully link the sanction to the incident and support restorative practice in the home is restated.

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

The manager is qualified and experienced. The manager and the heads of education and health work together effectively. Collectively, this senior management team has made positive changes to the quality of care. The manager's high aspirations for the children and significant changes towards a trauma-informed ethos are apparent. The staff spoke positively about the support from the management team. A member of staff said: 'The management have shown a positive mindset, spirit and enthusiasm which has been infectious to the entire staff group.'

The manager has met the two compliance notices served at the last inspection. The manager has also met the requirement to notify Ofsted of significant incidents that have occurred at the home. One requirement and four recommendations from the last inspection were not inspected during this visit; these have been restated.

Improvement is needed in some areas of monitoring of the home to improve practice. These shortfalls include:

- following the review of the CCTV as part of an allegation or practice concern, the records are unclear as to who reviewed the CCTV and when this occurred
- following all significant incidents, such as bullying, that strategies are identified to reduce the risk of recurrence
- monitoring and oversight of the external forestry area are not yet fully implemented.

The children continue to receive care from a stable and committed staff team. The staff receive regular supervision. Supervision records demonstrate that when concerns are identified, these are sufficiently discussed in supervision. However, the quality and recordings of supervision records are inconsistent. Some supervision records are poor and do not evidence that staff are receiving good-quality support.

The children's records are meaningful. They reflect the work that is undertaken with each child. Records guide the staff to support the children and provide consistent care. The children contribute to their plans.

## 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>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—</p> <p>if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority’s or a relevant person’s performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child’s needs are met in accordance with the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 5(c))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person should play a full part in promoting the best interests of the child, proactively advocating for the child to ensure that others play their role and deliver the high-quality support that is needed.</p>	30 July 2021
<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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, that reviews and monitoring of CCTV and records following safeguarding concerns and allegations include the individual’s name and the date undertaken.</p>	30 July 2021
<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>	30 June 2021



<p>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> <p>In particular, that individuals with designated responsibility for the forestry school and surrounding areas monitor and record checks undertaken to ensure that the area remains safe for the children.</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'); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to 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 home; or</p> <p>in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016.</p> <p>The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual—</p> <p>does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or</p> <p>works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (2)(a) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b) (6)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that bank and casual staff are enrolled on the level 3 diploma.</p> <p>This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.</p>	<p>30 July 2021</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p>	<p>27 August 2021</p>

Specifically, that all staff receive good-quality supervision and that their supervision records reflect this.	
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## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children’s communal living environment is homely and welcoming. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that the ethos of the home supports each child to learn. Leaders and managers must ensure that the curriculum is built around children’s needs and interests and their career goals and ambitions. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 29, paragraph 5.18)
- The registered person should ensure that the ethos of the home supports each child to learn. Leaders and managers must measure and analyse children’s behaviours and attitudes over time to ascertain whether individual children improve in these areas and adapt the curriculum accordingly. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 29, paragraph 5.18)
- The registered person should ensure that the ethos of the home supports each child to learn. Leaders and managers should continue to develop their recent work towards measuring children’s existing knowledge in specific subjects. Managers must identify whether children know more and can do more than when they started their course. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 29, paragraph 5.18)
- The registered person should ensure that the independent staff who take part in the review and scrutiny of physical restraint receive training in physical restraint. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 46, paragraph 9.36)
- The registered person should ensure that any sanctions used to address behaviour should be restorative in nature. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- The registered person should ensure that all records of single separation clearly record the reason for the single separation continuing. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 50, paragraph 9.65)

## **Information about this 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'.

## Secure children's home details

**Unique reference number:** SC035500

**Provision sub-type:** Secure Unit

**Registered provider address:** South Gloucestershire Adults, Children's and Health, PO Box 1955, Bristol BS37 0DE

**Responsible individual:** Jo Cross

**Registered manager:** Alison Sykes

## Inspectors

Natalie Burton, lead Social Care Inspector

Debbie Foster, Social Care Inspector

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