

1255823

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to four children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 17 June 2017.

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 setting on 14 October 2020 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 August 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

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

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

Date of last inspection: 4 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/12/2019	Full	Good
25/09/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Overall, children make good progress. Notable achievements include increased time with family, including overnight stays. Healthy routines have been established for one child who now appears more settled, and their behaviour has significantly improved. Another child is engaging more in social activities and this has improved their confidence. Staff prepare children well for education, and good forward planning gives the children the opportunity to plan and discuss any worries before starting in a new educational setting.

Staff have a good understanding of children's needs. Those children who are moving forward, to the next chapter of their lives, are supported to develop the independence skills that they need. With staff support, one child has successfully written a CV and found a part-time job. This provides an excellent opportunity for them to experience life in the workplace.

Staff and managers meet the diverse needs of the children. The communal areas of the home are bright, welcoming and child focused. Children have personalised their room in ways that reflect their identity and interests. However, some of the bedrooms are cluttered and unclean. Children say that staff support them to keep their bedroom clean and tidy. However, staff have not recognised that some children are not able to do this due to previous life experiences. Therefore, children do not always have an adequately clean personal space to spend time in.

The children have a trusted adult that they can talk to about worries or concerns. However, the children's guide does not provide information to inform children how to complain confidentially about their care or how to raise concerns about their own well-being. This means that children may struggle to raise concerns about their care as they are not informed how to do this without speaking to staff.

Staff demonstrate a very good understanding of each of the children's likes and dislikes. Together, the children and staff design structured, well-planned activities that children benefit from.

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

Staff help children to understand risks and how to stay safe. Staff appreciate the need for children to take appropriate risks in order to learn to become more independent.

Staff hold children in mind at all times and make every effort to make sure that children feel cared for. For example, when a child spends the day at a local skate park, they drop by with a packed lunch to make sure he is alright. This helps him engage with staff support as he knows that they genuinely care about him.

Risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated by managers and staff. However, these records are not always accurate and do not always identify the level of risk for children. This means that staff may not have the information that they need in order to fully understand how to keep children safe. In practice, staff know the children well and provide safe care.

Incidents of concern are thoroughly and promptly investigated. Discussions that take place between staff and children are child focused and help children to understand the impact of their behaviours on themselves and others. Where necessary, to ensure children are safe, staff involve the police to manage moments of crisis. However, staff work closely with the police, so that the children do not become criminalised. Staff use successful de-escalation techniques and rarely use physical intervention unless this is necessary to keep children or others safe from harm.

All staff collaborate with social workers, schools and an education psychologist, results in behaviour and care plans that are well-informed and accurately identify children's specific needs. One professional stated that all the staff are 'fully engaged with sessions and have good oversight of children's progress and concerns.' Also, that they are 'incredibly supportive' and have a good understanding of the therapeutic the model of care that underpins their practice.

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

As the registered manager is currently away from work, the home is being managed by the deputy manager. He has a strong commitment to improving outcomes for the children. Staff are effective advocates for children. The deputy manager challenges other professionals appropriately to ensure that children's best interests remain at the heart of care planning.

Managers and leaders make decisions that are child focused. When a child comes to live at the home, their move is thoughtfully planned. The needs of all the children are considered, including those that currently live in the home, to ensure that their needs are compatible, and they can live safely as a group. This provides the children with a positive environment and helps children to settle quickly into the home.

Management monitoring systems are not fully effective. This is a missed opportunity for managers and leaders to quickly identify strengths and weaknesses of the service. However, regular practice observations of staff provide a level of scrutiny that ensures practice is appropriate, well-informed and that children have a positive and consistent experience of care.

Staff do not receive regular supervision sessions. Of those that have been conducted, there is no clear accountability or timescales for identified actions to be completed. Not all staff have received annual appraisals. For those that have, records of these appraisals lack detail and do not always identify learning and development needs or identify plans as to how staff training needs will be met.

Training is recorded and all core training is up to date. Due to the pandemic, some specialist face-to-face training has not been completed.

When senior leaders become aware of allegations against staff, these are acted on and necessary steps are taken to ensure children are safeguarded.

Senior leaders and managers have learnt from recent errors in practice regarding a delay in notifying relevant professionals about allegations made against staff.

Managers take appropriate action to identify and address any practice issues that are identified.

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 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>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>	31 December 2021
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c))</p>	31 December 2021
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))</p>	31 December 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person must ensure that the care meets each child's needs and promotes their welfare, and includes, but is not limited to, a clean environment.

In particular, the children's bedrooms. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.3)

- The registered person must ensure that the children's guide helps children to understand:
 - how to make a complaint in line with the home's complaints procedure;
 - how they can access advocacy support or independent advocacy if eligible; and
 - how to contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner.This information must be available for children. (Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22)
- The registered person must ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. In particular, ensure the information relating to any risk is clearly and correctly recorded in children's risk assessments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1255823

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Hampshire Council, 3rd Floor, Elizabeth II Court
North, The Castle, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG

Responsible individual: John Stacey

Registered manager: Kerry Pringle

Inspector

Jill Sephton-Wright, Social Care Inspector

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