

SC035500

Registered provider: South Gloucestershire Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this secure 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 24 children aged between 10 and 18 years. There were 12 children living at the home at the time of this monitoring visit.

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, who registered with Ofsted in July 2015, has been absent from the home since May 2022. Senior leaders are in the process of recruiting an interim manager.

Inspection date: 8 June 2022

This monitoring visit

The home was judged inadequate at the full inspection carried out between 20 and 22 April 2022. Following that inspection, Ofsted issued compliance notices in respect of regulation 13, the leadership and management standard, and regulation 20, relating to physical restraint. Following the full inspection, when serious concerns were identified by Ofsted, the YCS took the decision to stop placing children at the home. The YCS may place a child under exceptional circumstances with the

agreement of Ofsted. This arrangement will be reviewed after the next full inspection.

The purpose of this monitoring visit was to review the actions taken to address the compliance notices. The additional three requirements and one recommendation made at the full inspection in April 2022 will be considered at the next inspection.

Sufficient action has been taken to address the action points set out in the compliance notices.

Senior leaders have, alongside Ofsted's previous inspection report, identified shortfalls in the quality of care and shared these with the wider staff team. An improvement board has been set up that includes the home's managers and a range of relevant external professionals. The board's function is to identify improvements needed, to maintain close oversight of the delivery of the action plan, and to ensure improvement in the care, safety and well-being of children. It is too early to determine the impact of the Board's input.

The responsible individual has committed to spending more time at the home, enabling her to provide a more rigorous level of scrutiny. The head of education, who was in charge of the home on the day of the monitoring visit, has a well-informed awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. She speaks passionately about the positive steps being taken to address the concerns and to begin to change the culture.

Managers and staff have been provided with good-quality training in the legal criteria that determine the circumstances when physical restraint and single separation (where children are locked in an area when they meet the legal criteria of being a significant risk to themselves or others) can be used with children. Inspectors spoke with staff, who were able to describe the learning from this training. Additionally, staff are receiving training in how to promote positive behaviour. They demonstrated a sound understanding of how to use de-escalation techniques to try and avoid the need for physical restraint.

There have been three incidents of physical restraint since the last inspection. There has been improved management monitoring and oversight of these incidents, involving external safeguarding professionals when necessary. Where shortfalls in staff practice have been identified, managers have acted. Managers have introduced a reflective learning document that provides staff with clear information about the nature of the shortfalls, and what they need to do to reduce the risk of a recurrence. Management instruction letters have been issued to staff when there have been concerns about their practice.

Managers have made it clear to staff that the 'finger and thumb' physical restraint must never be used on children. There have been no incidents of this hold being

used since the last inspection. There have also been no incidents of physical restraint being used to bring about children's compliance with staff requests.

Single separation has been used four times with children since the last inspection. Records demonstrate that the use is in line with regulations. In one example, managers listened to the child's views and made changes to practice. Improved management oversight and learning reduces the risk of a similar incident happening again.

Children told inspectors that the home feels much calmer. However, due to daily routines which were introduced to maintain safe staffing levels during the COVID-19 pandemic, there are some occasions when children are in their rooms when they would prefer to be in communal areas. Managers confirmed that they are in the process of reviewing and adjusting daily routines to phase out this practice.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/04/2022	Full	Inadequate
08/06/2021	Full	Good
20/04/2021	Full	Inadequate
21/01/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that a restorative approach is maintained with children so that they can reflect upon and consider their behaviour.</p>	5 June 2022
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>the privacy of children is appropriately protected; (Regulation 21(a))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff do not enter children's bedrooms or remove the cover to the viewing panels without knocking on the door and checking with the child that it is appropriate to do so.</p>	5 June 2022
<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>Specifically, that all staff receive good-quality supervision and that their supervision records reflect any conversations and learning about significant events such as restraints.</p>	31 July 2022

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the ethos of the home supports each child to learn. In particular, managers should embed and secure the new monitoring and tracking tools into the work of the school so that the increased shared understanding this provides informs the planning of the curriculum for each child, and formalise the careers programme so that it can be tailored to the needs of individual children based on their aspirations and plans. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18)

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.

Secure children's home details

Unique reference number: SC035500

Provision sub-type: Secure unit

Registered provider: South Gloucestershire Council

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

Helen Simmons, Social Care Inspector

Paul Taylor, Social Care Inspector

Shaun Common, Senior Officer Secure Estate – Quality Assurance Manager

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