

SC038435

Registered provider: Sunfield Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is part of a residential special school. Since May 2017, it has become a subsidiary of the Ruskin Mill Trust. The registered manager is qualified to level 5 in leadership and management and was registered with Ofsted in April 2018.

The home is registered to accommodate up to 61 children who have severe and complex learning difficulties and behavioural needs, including seven placements for children who require short breaks. There are 12 houses within the grounds of the school. At the time of this inspection, six houses were open and were accommodating 21 children.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 June 2019

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 good

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

Date of last inspection: 26 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/09/2018	Full	Good
31/05/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/09/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/06/2017	Full	Inadequate

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 registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph 3. The requirements are that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(d)) This specifically relates to Schedule 2 (4) and (6).</p>	31/08/2019
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1)) Specifically, ensure that there is a medically approved medication procedure, ensure that the medication procedure includes clear guidance for the administration of as and when (PRN) medication and ensure that the senior leadership team undertakes a review to reduce medication errors.</p>	31/08/2019
<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 helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c))</p>	31/12/2019

Recommendations

- Children's homes staff should continue to seek and develop appropriate social opportunities for children. To enhance each child's talents their interests should be understood and nurtured, with children selecting activities based on their personal preferences and abilities, so far as is reasonable. Staff should also

support children to try activities that are 'new' for them, where appropriate. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.4)

- The registered person should oversee the welfare of the children in their care through observation and engagement with: each child; the home's staff; each child's family/carers where appropriate; and professionals involved in the care or protection of each child including their social worker, Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), teachers, clinicians and other health professionals etc. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.23)
- 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. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children achieve their targets and objectives and make good progress. Individual key-work sessions with children enable staff to understand each child's different needs. Children's progress towards adulthood is enhanced by their residential experience.

Staff promote children's participation and engagement. Children are at ease and enjoy spending time with staff, who understand them well. Children go out in the local community more and activities are also developing on-site, including the use of a farm and communal social events. Increasing these activities further, in line with the Ruskin Mill ethos, will help children to make more friends and to increase their social skills further.

Children learn new communication skills and alternative ways to manage their needs and emotions. This increases their ability to cope successfully in a range of situations as well as to live alongside others. These skills have a positive impact on their quality of life and the progress that they make.

Children live in six different houses and attend a school which is on the same site. The houses are in the process of being refurbished. Work completed so far is to a good standard and helps to ensure that each child can feel relaxed, warm and comfortable. However, some areas, such as the kitchens, sensory rooms and activity rooms, have not yet benefited from the development programme and they look tired and bare.

Overall, children's health needs are well met. Staff take a proactive role in looking after children's day-to-day health and well-being and work closely with health professionals and parents. However, medication is not being consistently administered in line with a medically approved protocol. There have been three medication errors this year. These

have been thoroughly investigated and robust actions have been taken. However, the senior leadership team is currently undertaking a review to ensure that these errors stop. The medication procedure does not contain clear guidance for the administration of as and when (PRN) medication.

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

There has been significant management investment over the past 12 months, which has resulted in careful consideration being given to the safeguarding of children. Leaders have successfully consulted on, and managed, a restructuring of the safeguarding team and have better promoted safeguarding across the school site. Consequently, safeguarding concerns are well managed by the registered manager and the safeguarding team. There is a prompt review of any incidents and quick referrals to safeguarding agencies.

The registered manager works in partnership with safeguarding agencies and conducts good-quality internal investigations, which she shares with partner agencies. These result in actions being taken to improve the safety and well-being of children.

Vigilant staff keep children safe and help them to understand how to keep themselves safe. Staff have made sure that risk assessments are clear and updated after incidents. Close working with teaching staff, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and advocacy services means that children thrive educationally, socially, emotionally and physically.

Due to children's complex needs, they can at times display extremely difficult and challenging behaviour. Managers carefully analyse incidents to identify any learning. There are clear behaviour management strategies in place to help children to de-escalate their behaviours. Staff have a good understanding of these behaviours and know what action to take in response. As a result, most children's behaviour improves.

Ruskin Mill Trust do not always ensure that staff recruitment procedures are consistently applied. For example, some staff recruitment records do not record verification (so far as is reasonably practicable) of why previous employment or positions working with vulnerable adults or children ended. Neither do records consistently contain a satisfactory explanation of any gaps in employment for agency staff. Consequently, it is unclear whether some staff have been appropriately vetted.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last inspection, managers have continued to make improvements across the residential service. The registered manager has ensured that children continue to have access to the right staffing levels that match their needs and vulnerabilities. Children are benefiting from more consistent staff teams.

A programme of continual recruitment and increasing stability of house staff teams have begun to increase staff morale. Although these improvements are in their infancy, with a

high number of new staff still on probation, staff speak passionately about the children and want the very best for them.

Staff receive regular, good-quality supervision, which focuses on the needs of children and supports staff to reflect. Staff have a good understanding of each child's abilities and strive to help them to make ongoing progress.

The senior management team has a clear vision for the service and is gradually implementing positive changes for staff and children. For example, the on-site farm is being developed, children are going out into the local community more and are being supported to increase their independence skills by cooking in their own homes.

Managers have good oversight of the service and continue to use quality assurance tools to improve outcomes for children. However, managers do not always look specifically at the experiences of each individual child. This is a missed opportunity to identify learning and to influence outcomes for that child.

Staff attend a programme of mandatory training. However, subjects such as communication, attachment disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder are not routinely covered. Training records do not always show when staff have attended additional training. For example, a course on supporting blind and partially sighted children was not referenced. This shortfall has had no direct negative impact on children. However, it is difficult for managers to tell which staff attend training and when.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC038435

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Sunfield Children's Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Clent Grove, Clent, Stourbridge, Worcestershire
DY9 9PB

Responsible individual: Graeme Cheyne

Registered manager: Sarah Marshall

Inspectors

Dawn Bennett: social care inspector

Alison Cooper: social care inspector

Debbie Bond: social care inspector

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