

# SC391708

Registered provider: Fairways Care (UK) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home operated by a charitable organisation. The charity provides a range of residential, fostering, educational and training services. The home is registered for up to two children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been in her current role since September 2018 and was registered on 22 March 2019.

**Inspection dates:** 24 to 25 June 2019

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account** **requires improvement to be good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **requires improvement to be good**

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

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

**Date of last inspection:** 19 April 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
19/04/2018	Full	Good
31/05/2017	Full	Good
14/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/07/2016	Full	Outstanding

## 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><b>12: The protection of children standard</b></p> <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health; and that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(vi)(b)(d) and (e))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the children's individual risk assessments include an accurate assessment of the risks of lone working under different circumstances</li> <li>■ medical advice is always sought for head injuries, even those which appear to be minor</li> <li>■ the access to the child's bedroom upstairs is improved to provide a full-sized doorway which is safe for children and staff.</li> </ul>	<p>31/07/2019</p>
<p><b>13: The leadership and management standard</b></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 helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p>	<p>31/07/2019</p>

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to 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; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(2)(a)(c)(d)(g)(i) and (h))</p> <p>In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ ensure that there are enough staff to care for each child safely</li> <li>■ ensure that behaviour management and restraint practice is informed by research, with the aim to reduce the overall number of restraints over time</li> <li>■ continue the present review of the electronic recording system to ensure that managers can easily monitor restraint practice.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>20: Restraint and deprivation of liberty</b></p> <p>Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (2))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ only approved methods of physical intervention are used</li> <li>■ only trained members of staff carry out restraints</li> <li>■ restraint is only carried out when there is no alternative available.</li> </ul>	31/07/2019

## Recommendations

- Ensure that records kept electronically (regulation 38) can be easily accessed by anyone with a legitimate need to view them and, if required, can be reproduced in a legible form. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2) In particular, continue to review the electronic records system with a view to facilitating easier monitoring by leaders, managers, independent visitors and inspectors.

- The local authority, as a corporate parent, the child's social worker and health professionals should work with children's home staff to secure and facilitate access to the health services that each child needs. ('Promoting the health and well-being of looked-after children', March 2015, page 24, paragraph 86) In particular, ensure that there is creative, collaborative work with the placing authority to encourage the child to engage in a form of therapy which is acceptable to him.

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good**

The home has been judged requires improvement to be good because there are weaknesses in behaviour management and risk assessment which have affected the judgement for all three outcome areas.

Although many aspects of leadership and management are strong, these shortfalls are linked to the home's commitment to one-to-one staffing. This means that staff often work alone. This is often appropriate, but when the children are in a heightened state, lack of flexibility in staffing can increase the risks for children and staff. There have been some serious incidents in which staff have been hurt. In a small number of incidents, some children have also been at risk of harm.

The weaknesses in leadership and management and safeguarding are balanced by positive outcomes for the children overall. The home has a strong ethos of therapeutic parenting and the leadership team is child-centred and keen to drive improvement.

Children generally enjoy very positive relationships with the staff. Their healthcare needs are well met. Both children receive a healthy diet which is tailored to their completely different individual requirements. The staff support children through key-worker discussions to develop an understanding of sexual health, identity and diversity. Feedback from the placing social workers to the home has been extremely positive.

Children have ready access to the company's therapeutic services. One child has benefited from regular play therapy. The other child has been offered therapy through the company's in-house services, but he is not ready to accept this. This limits the prospects for any change in some aggressive behaviours towards women and therefore has implications for the child's wish to progress to a foster placement. Creative strategies are needed to help this child to receive help in a way that he finds acceptable.

Both children have made very good progress since they arrived in the home. They have almost 100% attendance at school. One child could not read when he came to the home. His reading age is now three years ahead of his chronological age. This will enable him to make the best of his educational opportunities.

The home and garden are pleasant and relaxing places for the children. They are consulted daily and their environment reflects the choices they have made. The children have planted and cared for their own flowers and soft fruit. They have helped the staff to design a garden which is a haven for wildlife. They now have plans for a hedgehog house and are considering how to furnish and use the new summer house. Helping to develop the garden has provided the children with valuable learning and a chance to become involved in caring for nature.

Children enjoy other exciting, healthy activities, many of which bring them into positive contact with the wider community. For example, a member of staff takes the children and their friends out on cycle rides in the attractive countryside near the home. One child is enjoying horse riding and learning to play the guitar. Another child plays football every week and attends a youth club, where he has made friends.

Children in the home are too young for a formal independence programme. However, they are encouraged to cook for themselves and tidy their rooms after school. One child cooks meals regularly, using his own low-fat cook book. This has helped him to understand the importance of healthy eating and, as a result, he has lost some weight in relation to his growth.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good**

Four weeks before this inspection, a lone-working member of staff was seriously injured in an incident, requiring treatment in hospital. The incident involved attempted strangulation and the staff member was afraid that she might lose consciousness. Had this happened, there would have been no adult to respond to a medical emergency and support the child.

There have been two allegations made against staff. Both allegations have been reported appropriately to the designated officer and were unsubstantiated. In the incident described above, the designated officer's view was that lone working with this child placed the staff member in a vulnerable situation. They recommended that the home and placing authority should review staffing levels.

In the inspector's professional judgement, this incident was a 'near miss' which requires assertive action to prevent a repetition.

Risk assessment and behaviour-planning documentation lack clarity in places. These documents are open to misinterpretation. For example:

- there is no lone-working risk assessment for either of the children
- the home's own generic lone-working risk assessment, which correctly states that staffing should be in proportion to risk, is not being adhered to

- the behaviour management plans still make provision for lone-working staff to restrain children 'as a last resort', even though this has been proved not to be safe.

The home cares for two younger children, but even taking this into consideration, the high number of restraints is concerning. Although there has been a significant reduction compared with the previous year, there were 54 restraints between April 2018 and the present inspection.

Most restraints have been carried out correctly and for legitimate reasons. However, in a small number of examples, staff members have used unauthorised strategies to control behaviour, one included a situation when a member of the public came to assist of a member of staff who was alone with a child.

A small number of restraints have been excessive in relation to the risk posed by the child. In one case, a nine-year old child, who was throwing objects within his bedroom, was lifted over his bed and carried out onto the landing. As a result, he sustained an injury. This is not the only occasion when staff have picked up this child and carried him, which is not an authorised technique.

Inappropriate use of restraint can reinforce previous abusive experiences and damage children's trust in adults. It can also have a negative impact on children's dignity and is not consistent with the home's strong therapeutic ethos.

It is positive that the children in this home have not gone missing or absent since the last inspection. The children are also not at risk of child sexual exploitation, radicalisation or criminal exploitation.

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

Since the last full inspection, there have been substantial changes to the staff team. The former registered manager left the home, along with three other staff. New staff were appointed, using appropriately thorough recruitment procedures.

There is now a full team of eight staff, including the registered manager. This team provides one-to-one staffing for both children. However, as described above, there are times when more staff are needed to manage some of the children's behaviour safely.

The registered manager monitors restraint and all other records, but this is time-consuming because of the idiosyncrasies of the home's electronic recording system. This requires the manager to open every document individually and record the summary on another document. It does allow the responsible individual and other senior managers to access records remotely. Any independent scrutiny of records is very slow.

Leaders and managers are undertaking a review of these systems with the aim to improve them. The home has recently requested a new format for recording incidents.

This should improve matters, because the database can now be interrogated more effectively to facilitate management monitoring.

A new manager was appointed from within the team. She is a graduate in criminology and psychological studies and is working towards her level 5 diploma in leadership and management. She was registered three months ago and has already had a positive impact on the team, bringing its members together after a challenging period of disruption.

One staff member who responded to the Ofsted survey said, 'It's very homely and it feels like we are one big family. Staff and young people all have positive relationships and work together to ensure the best possible outcomes for the children. I really love working here and feel well supported by management and all my colleagues.'

The registered manager is also well supported. The senior residential manager and responsible individual visit the home regularly. The manager is ambitious for the children and proud of their achievements.

Staff receive regular and effective supervision. The team meets every two weeks to share good practice. Alternate meetings are dedicated to training and clinical supervision with an external consultant. This helps to bring fresh ideas and additional support to the staff's practice.

Staff receive good-quality training. All staff are undertaking or have completed their qualification at level 3, apart from staff who are still on their probationary period. The staff are also encouraged to complete a level 3 award in 'Understanding Therapeutic Childcare'. Some staff are about to undertake other specialised training in therapeutic parenting. This will lead to the team having greater insight into children's behaviours.

The home has met previous inspection requirements relating to the quality of the independent visitor's reports and obtaining all the required care documents from the placing authority. The home's leaders and managers have ensured that both these requirements have been met.

## **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:** SC391708

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Fairways Care (UK) Limited

**Registered provider address:** Fairways House, Mount Pleasant Road, Northam, Southampton SO14 0QB

**Responsible individual:** Jonathan Loney

**Registered manager:** Abigail Dear

## Inspector(s)

Heather Chaplin, social care inspector

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