

1269565

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is part of a specialist school providing residential care and a short-break service. The home can provide care for up to five children with learning disabilities.

The home registered in January 2018. The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2023.

At the time of this inspection, there was one child and one young person aged 18 living at the home. The school was closed for the summer holidays. Inspectors reviewed records that showed joint working with school staff to support children's social care and well-being.

The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this school.

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 August 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 11 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/10/2023	Full	Good
15/11/2022	Full	Good
23/08/2021	Full	Good
05/12/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good care and support from caring, attentive and skilled staff. There are trusting and nurturing relationships between staff and the children. This helps children to settle at the home and be happy.

Children's communication needs are met well. Staff use illustrated short stories very well to communicate with children. They use social stories to give children information and to help them to share their wishes and feelings. For example, staff prepared a social story to explain to a child why they came to stay at the home earlier than planned. They also used them to tell children about the inspectors being in the home, and what the inspectors wanted to talk to them about.

Children make good progress from their starting points. A parent said that the home is wonderful, and essential for their child's development. They said that their child has learned a lot in the time they have lived at the home, including becoming much better at communicating. The parent added that they feel at a loss about what to do when their child turns 18, because the child would benefit from continued support from staff they have known for many years.

Children who live in the home are supported to spend time with their families. Children's families are always welcome to visit them. A child enjoys regular visits from their parent, and they prefer to eat the food their parent brings for them.

School is an important part of the children and young people's routines. Attendance is particularly good because the school is in the same building as the home. There is good joint working between the home and the school, and children's support needs and progress are discussed at weekly handover meetings. This helps to provide an integrated approach to children's care.

Staff work well with external professionals to meet the children's health needs. Children are supported to attend routine appointments and they are helped to see doctors when they need to. This helps to promote children's health and well-being.

Children's bedrooms have been painted and decorated in colours of their choice. For example, a young person who enjoys music and is talented at playing the piano has a mural of keyboard keys on their bedroom wall. However, the communal areas of the home feel less homely and welcoming.

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

Children are safe and they receive care from staff who understand how to keep them safe. Managers work closely with children's parents and external professionals to ensure that risks are managed well and to prevent harm to children and young people. The

manager and staff acted quickly to support a child who became distressed while in the care of their parent. They brought the child to stay at the home earlier than planned to prevent the situation from escalating. A parent of another child said that the manager is always responsive when parents need help. They recalled how their own child came to the home on an emergency basis because there were no other suitable services for them.

Physical interventions are used only when it is necessary to prevent harm. Staff are trained to do this safely. Managers review incidents to ensure there is learning from them and that processes are in place to prevent recurrences. The quality of records has improved, and they now show what actions are taken following incidents.

Incidents involving damage to the home have reduced and work to repair damaged areas has started. However, this is not always done quickly and can create hazards for the children.

Children's medication is managed well, and staff are trained to administer medication safely. The home keeps records to show that staff are giving children their medication as instructed by health professionals. This is essential to support children's health and well-being.

Recruitment practices have improved; managers now verify references to ensure that there are no concerns that mean staff are unsuitable to work at the home. There is a stable staff team, and this helps to provide consistent care to the children and young people.

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

Leaders and managers know the children well and understand their needs. The manager works well with staff, parents and external professionals to ensure that children get the right care to meet their needs. The manager is enthusiastic about providing good-quality care and support to children and young people. Parents and professionals were positive about the good relationships they have with staff and the manager.

The manager is often involved in the delivery of care to children and young people. This means that he does not always have oversight of staff practice and records. As a result, some of the care records were not up to date. For example, a young person's care plan, risk assessment and personal emergency evacuation plan had not been updated with information about a serious injury that impacted their mobility. However, there was no evidence that the young person had been further harmed by this shortfall. A requirement in relation to records not being up to date was made at the last inspection and has been restated following this inspection.

Following an injury to a young person from a glass panel on an internal fire door, leaders and managers have not acted swiftly to prevent further injuries. There is no

written plan to show how they will minimise risks from other doors of the same type in the home.

Staff receive relevant training, and they understand the needs of the children. This continues to ensure that children achieve good outcomes, and they have enjoyable experiences. However, some of the staff do not feel appropriately supported by leaders and managers. They said that the way the manager works, including working off site, means that they do not always know when the manager will be at the home. Leaders and managers said that, from now on, they will be more transparent about their working patterns.

Leaders and managers have made some improvements since the last inspection. There is now an effective system to record, review and monitor incidents of restraint. Staff support has improved, with more regular team meetings. Feedback from external professionals and parents is now being included in the quality of care reviews and it formed part of the manager's performance review. Work is ongoing to do this for all staff's appraisals.

The frequency of staff supervisions has been increased to allow supervisors more time to plan. However, supervision is still not provided in a consistent manner, and the timeliness and quality of reports varies. A requirement made at the last inspection has been restated in relation to this.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered persons must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
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 the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(e)(f)(h)) In particular, leaders and managers must monitor and improve the quality of records so that these always contain up-to-date information about children's needs. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	26 September 2024
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year.	26 September 2024

(Regulation 33 (4)(b)(c)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that all staff receive regular and effective supervision and that their appraisals include feedback from children and from other staff. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that there is a robust risk assessment of the glass panels on the internal doors, and must put safeguards in place to prevent another serious injury to a child. Additionally, leaders and managers must ensure that damage to the home is repaired quickly.	26 September 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the home provides a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. In particular, work must be done to make the home feel homely and welcoming. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 1269565

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Responsible individual: Oyedele Salami

Registered manager: David Ibanez Montero

Inspectors

Thobekile Bandama, Social Care Inspector

Richard Wyper, Social Care Inspector

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