

1277041

Registered provider: Nottingham City Council

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned by a local authority. It provides care for up to two children. These children may have emotional and social difficulties.

The home is led by an experienced registered manager.

Inspection date: 23 February 2023

Date of last inspection: 1 August 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At these inspections, the inspector(s) evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

The home provides a welcoming environment for children, and they want to spend good-quality time with staff. Children's bedrooms are decorated to match children's hobbies and interests. One child was unwell during the inspection. Staff showed concern and made them hot chocolate to help them feel better. This helps children to know they are cared for.

Children receive meaningful care from staff. Staff know the children well, and they make great efforts to build relationships with the children's families. There have been good examples of the manager meeting with families to try and promote family contact for children. This means a lot to children because their families are important to them.

Both children attend school and are making progress. School awards are displayed with pride in the home. Staff have a rule that homework needs to be completed before games consoles can be used. Although one child was reluctant to engage in education, staff have supported this child to attend and have forged strong links with the school. This child is now enjoying school, which is a huge achievement.

Children are supported to stay fit and healthy. One child has been supported to join several football clubs. When this child played their first match as a goalkeeper, the staff team went along to give support, and the child received a gift for saving a penalty. This child has made friends and is becoming more independent in the community.

The safety of children

Since the last inspection, the manager has supported staff to better recognise, respond and record risks for children. As a result, the manager has improved oversight of children's care, and children are ultimately safer.

Although children are involved in some behavioural incidents, when these happen, they are well recorded and responded to by the manager and staff. Staff speak to the children about incidents, and they are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and well-being. On one occasion, the manager recognised that staff had got something wrong for a child and that this had caused them upset. The manager then reflected back on this with the child and apologised. This was helpful because it enabled the child to see that adults can also make mistakes. There was a strong emphasis placed on trying to repair the relationship between the child and staff.

The manager is supporting staff to look beyond children's presenting behaviours and to look instead at their underlying emotional needs. Staff maintain clear boundaries for children and, as a result, this helps children feel safer. For one child, who is relatively new to the home, staff consistently tell this child that they are wanted and that they are committed to caring for them in the long term. Staff recognise that this child is on their own journey and that it will take time for the child to trust them.

The manager has become more effective in their communications with Ofsted. All relevant notifications for children have been notified to Ofsted, and necessary updates are provided. The manager has sought greater support from the responsible individual, and together they have now a clearer understanding of reporting thresholds.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

Since the last inspection, the manager has implemented new quality assurance systems. These have helped the manager to have improved oversight of the care provided to children. The manager has become more proactive and organised in their leadership role. For example, decision-making on children's files is now more evident.

Staff are clearer as to what their role is and what is expected of them. This is because professional supervision is taking place regularly, and actions are set in supervision meetings. Team meetings have clear agendas and help to drive forward the improvements in care and support provided to children. If there are shortfalls in staff practice, the manager responds in a timely way to address concerns. Staff are clear where the shortfalls are, and they know what to do to address these. For example, some staff have revisited relevant training. Where staff demonstrate good practice, the manager recognises this and praises staff in their supervision.

For one child who has left the home, the manager has ensured a good transition. Communication with the child's semi-independent provider has been good. The child's artwork and photos are still displayed in the home. Staff stay in communication with this child, and they look forward to their visits.

Although significant improvements have been made overall, children's progress is not yet being recorded or reflected over a longer period. This is necessary so that children know what goals they are working towards. Previous requirements set at the last inspection have been met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/07/2021	Full	Good
06/08/2019	Full	Good
21/11/2018	Full	Good

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. Children and their parents should be supported to understand the nature of records kept by the home and how to access them. Staff should understand their important role in encouraging the child to reflect on and understand their history, according to their age and understanding. Staff should keep and encourage children to keep appropriate memorabilia of the time spent living at the home and help them record significant life events. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1277041

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Nottingham City Council

Registered provider address: Nottingham City Council, Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham NG2 3NG

Responsible individual: Kay Sutt

Registered manager: Marcel Reid

Inspector

Andi Lilley-Tams, Social Care Inspector

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