

2513339

Registered provider: Central Bedfordshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides care for up to five children who need support to manage their behaviour.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2020.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 4 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 December 2021

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

Date of last inspection: 8 July 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/07/2019	Full	Good
16/05/2019	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff support children to engage with education. All the children have education places. One child has passed her GCSE exams. The staff are aware of other influences that have an impact on the children's ability to learn. The staff's understanding and support enable the children to progress and learn at a pace that is appropriate to them.

Staff have positive relationships with the children. They work hard to ensure that the children feel cared for and valued. This helps children to build positive and meaningful relationships with staff.

Children have a wide range of opportunities to try different hobbies and activities. One child is due to start ice skating lessons. Children have enjoyed day trips to Manchester United football ground and the seaside. They have had the opportunity to go on holiday and have made good memories. Children have developed their own interests and increased their self-esteem.

Staff help children to develop important life skills. During the inspection, one child said that she can budget for meals and cook for herself. Three of the children have experience of having a part-time job. Children spend free time out of the home with their friends. Children feel well prepared for when they move on and are developing friendships.

The children have an independent advocate. During the inspection, one child was observed to be having support from an advocate. Children are encouraged to express their feelings through discussions with staff. Children can see that staff act on their wishes and feelings.

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

Children feel safe at the home. Staff have safeguarding training and feel confident managing safeguarding incidents.

Children's behaviour support plans are personalised. The plans include children's input and give staff good guidance on how children want to be helped. The plans focus on strategies for staff to help children to safely manage their emotions. Staff understand how to support children and actively help children to manage their feelings.

Staff have used physical intervention on one occasion since the last inspection, to keep the child and others safe. Staff use their positive relationships with the children to prevent unnecessary physical interventions. This has led to no further physical interventions.

Effective protocols give good guidance to staff on managing incidents of children going missing from the home. Staff manage such incidents well. Staff always welcome

children back to the home following such an incident and children receive an independent return home interview. This has led to a reduction in the frequency of children going missing from the home.

The manager deals with safeguarding concerns effectively using a multi-agency approach. The manager implements safeguarding measures and does not leave the children vulnerable. However, on some occasions, the manager has not notified Ofsted promptly. This reduces Ofsted's ability to monitor the home effectively.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager holds a relevant level 5 qualification. He has good experience of working in children's homes. The manager is a good role model to the staff. Staff have good support and guidance to enable them to meet the children's needs.

Social workers said that the manager goes above and beyond expectations to help the children. The manager keeps social workers updated on the progress that children make. Social workers said that there are effective levels of communication. The manager ensures that he works in consultation with social workers to meet children's needs.

Staff said that they feel supported by the manager and have regular and effective supervision. Staff are encouraged and helped to develop their practice. They feel confident to approach the manager for guidance.

The manager has a continued support scheme for when children move on from the home. Children feel reassured and are helped to settle into their new homes. Children have managed moving on well because of the support provided.

The manager writes a six-monthly report following his review and monitoring of children's progress. The report includes positive feedback from children, parents and professionals. However, the report does not have a specific action plan to reflect the manager's plans to improve the home.

Staff have undertaken the home's mandatory training. Most staff have a level 3 diploma or equivalent and the other staff are working towards achieving a relevant level 3 diploma. However, staff do not have up-to-date training covering all the children's needs.

The staff said that the manager is supportive following incidents. However, on two occasions, the manager has not ensured that staff have had a timely and thorough debrief to reflect on their practice. This means that opportunities could be missed to improve practice and learn from incidents.

Some records do not contain full and current information. Some children's records are not accurate. This means that records do not completely reflect the support that children receive.

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
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) In particular, ensure that all risk assessments are accurate, staff have timely debriefs that are fully recorded following significant incidents, and that all relevant information is included in the children's records.	13 January 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e)) This requirement was raised at the last full inspection and has been restated.	13 December 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff access training on understanding and managing substance misuse, 'Prevent' duty and sexually harmful behaviours. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

- The registered manager should ensure that the six-monthly review report of the home clearly identifies an action plan for continuous improvements at the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

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: 2513339

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Central Bedfordshire Council

Registered provider address: Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford,
Central Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ

Responsible individual: Joy Piper

Registered managers: Amy Clark and James Hardy

Inspector

Amy Miles, Social Care Inspector

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