

2529648

Registered provider: Devon County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a local authority. The home is registered to provide care for three children who may have a physical and/or learning disability and/or sensory impairment. There were two children living in this home at the time of the inspection.

The previous registered manager resigned in December 2024. The new manager has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 April 2025

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: 2 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/07/2024	Full	Good
11/07/2023	Full	Good
28/06/2022	Full	Good
28/03/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Two children are living in this home. One child has lived at the home since the last inspection and another child has lived in the home for several months. One child was seen and spoken to during the inspection. This child said that they like living in the home and get on well with the staff. They like challenging the staff to play games and enjoyed a recent outing to the cinema. They visit the local driving range, and a trip is being planned to a local theme park. The other child did not wish to speak to the inspector. They find it difficult to leave their bedroom. They receive support from staff to go to the shop or for walks in the local community.

The children have both made progress since moving to this home. Social workers have commented on the positive relationships that staff have with the children and how homely the environment is. They said that this is the most stable home that one of the children has lived in. Children have been provided with stability and staff have shown strong levels of commitment to them. Staff provide children with therapeutic support. There are meaningful conversations taking place between the staff and children, which helps to better support them.

The home is clean, warm and comfortable. There are comfortable sofas in the lounge to sit on and space in the dining room for children to enjoy meals with staff. There are spacious gardens for children to play in, with suitable equipment for them to use. When one child expressed a wish to have a pull-up bar in the garden for them to exercise with, this was arranged for them. Children have suitable bedrooms and they are encouraged to personalise their rooms with things they like. Children are encouraged to develop their independence skills by learning to cook or by doing their own washing.

The children receive good levels of care from the staff who are responsive to their individual needs. Children are encouraged to have positive routines and to respond to the boundaries that are in place for them. For one child this is still being developed and they are encouraged to have better routines for sleep and nutrition. Staff encourage the children to eat healthy foods, be active and manage their own personal hygiene. The children are both accessing educational support in the home. The manager is thoughtful about how this can be further developed in the future, so children can achieve their full potential.

Children benefit from having some staff members who have worked with them consistently since they moved to this home. There are also some staff from other homes who are supporting the children now. This has meant that not all the staff know the children well and there have been some inconsistent approaches used by different staff. This means that children can receive mixed messages from staff on some occasions.

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

Safeguarding has been managed well in this home. Sometimes children find it difficult to manage their emotions safely. When children are experiencing challenges with managing their emotions, strong levels of support are available to help them with this. This helps children to calm more quickly and helps to prevent their behaviour from escalating. Physical restraints are not being used in this home and the staff have used different approaches to support children.

Communication with families, social workers and other professionals is timely and effective in helping to keep children safe and promoting their welfare. There are regular updates provided to professionals and family members that highlight the progress that children are making. If there are any worries identified about the children, then prompt action is taken to inform social workers of this.

There is good practice around prescription medication in this home. Regular checks take place, which help to ensure that any medication is given appropriately. When one recording error was identified, this was addressed effectively. This incident did not have any impact on the child.

When one child raised a concern about staff practice, prompt action was taken to seek advice from external agencies. An investigation was completed to better understand what had happened. No further action was required from managers regarding this. This incident was not notified to Ofsted at the time, but this has now been completed.

One parent said they were worried about their child's bedroom and how this looked when they visited the home. The manager and staff are now supporting this child with tidying their bedroom and keeping it clean.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The new manager knows the children well and has positive aspirations for their futures. She has strong relationships with the children and is regularly involved in their day-to-day care. The manager has a good understanding of the children's needs, and she works well with other agencies to ensure that children have the support they need. The manager advocates strongly for the children when this is needed. She has challenged the local authority when children's education plans have not been effective.

Positive levels of management oversight are seen in records relating to the children. The manager understands what is working well in this home and any areas that need further development. She has been thoughtful about what action staff need to take to better support the children. When one child is struggling with their eating, the manager offers a range of food choices to the child to support them with this. She has supported the child well by going shopping with them and having regular conversations about this.

Staff are provided with positive levels of supervision and training. The manager thinks about ways to improve practice through training and development. She has ensured that

staff have been provided with bespoke levels of training, in response to children's specific needs. This has helped staff to develop their skills and practice in key areas, so they have a greater understanding of children's needs and how to support them effectively.

Some staff have expressed worries about the support that is received by one child, and how this child's needs may require a higher level of support from staff now. They have said that children are sometimes given inconsistent messages by different staff or provided with support from staff who usually work in other homes. The manager constantly reviews children's plans to ensure that any support being provided is in line with their needs. There are several staffing vacancies and steps are being taken to recruit new staff. Some agency staff are being used, but these are people who are familiar to the children.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure they review and understand when serious incidents, such as concerns about staff practice, should be notified to Ofsted. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.12)
- The registered person should ensure children receive consistent levels of care from staff who work in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20)

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: 2529648

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Devon County Council, Chief Executive's Directorate, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QD

Responsible individual: Glenn Lobb

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Sarah Sheffield, Social Care Inspector

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