

2529667

Registered provider: Devon County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides short-break stays for disabled children. On occasion, it provides longer-term placements for children. Currently, two children live in the home and 10 children receive short breaks. Four children were present during the inspection.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since April 2023.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 August 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

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

Date of last inspection: 15 October 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/10/2024	Full	Good
07/11/2023	Full	Good
20/09/2022	Full	Good
12/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The inspector spent time with children. The children appeared happy and joyful during their short breaks. There was a lot of fun and laughter in this home, and children enjoyed spending time with the staff who cared for them. One professional highlighted the good practice that she has seen from staff who are child focused, responsive and reflective. Other professionals commented on the positive experiences that children have had during their time staying in this home.

Children enjoy a range of activities during their short breaks. Children regularly do fun activities, such as going for walks, to the park, the beach or to visit places in the local area. Children also enjoy doing crafts or learning to cook. Children are supported to make progress with their communication skills and are learning to be more active and move around the home independently.

Children are well cared for in this home. There is a stable team of staff in place who know the children well. They care for children in a sensitive and nurturing way that ensures that their privacy and dignity are maintained. The staff understand children's communication and behaviour, so they can interpret what children need. One child blows bubbles when he is unhappy and staff understand what this means. Another child is learning to use switches as a way of being able to communicate more. Agency staff are being used regularly in this home, but they are staff who are also familiar to the children.

The home is warm and welcoming with spacious areas for children to play. There is a large dining area, so children can enjoy meals together with the staff. Children's bedrooms are personalised with items they like, and this helps children to feel relaxed and at ease.

Parents said that their children enjoy their stays and look forward to coming for their short breaks. They said that staff are 'great'. They said that they talk to staff before their children arrive, and they also receive verbal feedback after their stays. Two parents commented that they usually have communication books, but these are missing. This was resolved during the inspection and new ones were put in place.

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

There has been a significant incident in which a child sustained an injury while in their bedroom. When this happened, the child was initially thought to be well enough to attend school. Following professional advice, that child was taken to the hospital where they were further assessed. The child did not require any further treatment or follow up, and they were not admitted to the hospital. Although risks were considered before the child began staying at the home, full consideration was not given to all the risks in their

bedroom. Since this incident, there has been reflection around what happened, and learning has been taken from this event. The staff involved have been spoken to and further discussions have taken place during supervision and in team meetings.

There have been several errors identified in relation to children's medication. One child was given too much medication, and another child was given their medication late. There have also been several recording errors. A new electronic system is in place for managing medication. Staff identified that there have been some issues in relation to this system. Reflection and learning have been taken from this, and steps are being taken to improve practice. Some staff have been provided with improvement plans, and further training has been given to staff.

When children move to this home, a risk assessment is completed that identifies a child's needs and considers whether staff can meet them. Vital information is gathered from families and professionals so that clear plans can be developed for the child. If there are gaps identified in this information, these are followed up by the manager. Although children's plans state that there are no concerns about the children being placed alongside other children, there is no detailed analysis of this. One child recently needed to move to another home as it was unsafe for them to be cared for alongside the other children. A transition plan was put in place to support the child with this move.

Social workers say that there is timely communication with them if there are any worries for the children. They report that meetings are usually well attended by staff. The manager and staff take positive action to ensure that there is effective communication with other professionals. All of this helps to keep children safe. When one child returned to live in the home, there was a proactive response from staff and the manager due to concerns about where the child had lived before. External agencies were informed, and an investigation commenced. Staff took positive steps to ensure that the right health professionals were supporting the child. Since returning to this home, the child has made considerable progress with their physical health.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers are ambitious for children, the staff and the home. They understand the children's needs and how to support them. They work hard to build relationships with children. The registered manager has been in post for several years and she knows the children very well. She understands that progress is different for each child and she provides opportunities for each child, to support them to make progress. She has positive aspirations for children's future and works hard to ensure that children can make progress from their starting points.

The home has a core team of staff who are working consistently with the children. Staff have a good understanding of the children's needs and how to care for them. Staff said that they enjoy working in this home. They have regular supervision and access to specific training that they need. Staff spoke positively about the support that they have received from their manager and consider that she is very approachable. They said that



if they have any worries, they know they can talk to the manager about this and it will be responded to in a timely way.

Leaders and managers have good oversight of the home. When areas of concern are identified, there is a strong level of reflection and analysis to support staff in improving their practice. The manager understands what works well in this home and any areas for improvement. Professionals are positive about the care that is being provided to children. They say that staff meet the complex needs of children well. Families and professionals appreciate the feedback that they receive about children's stays, and they report that communication with them is positive.

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, The 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 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 harm to the child; and have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)) The registered person should ensure that when children move into the home there is full consideration of any potential risks to the child's safety. This should include whether it is safe for the child to stay in the home alongside other children, and any potential risks in the environment. if children sustain injuries, then medical advice should be sought immediately and followed. Advice should be sought from an on-call manager when needed.	30 September 2025

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: 2529667

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: Post vacant

Registered manager: Heidi Rowlinson Jones

Inspector

Sarah Sheffield, Social Care Inspector

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