

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 children who have disabilities. It is owned and operated by the local authority.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 September 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

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

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

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 12 June 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Following the last full inspection, several requirements were made, and a compliance notice was served. A monitoring visit took place and concluded that enough action had been taken to meet the compliance notice.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/06/2019	Full	Inadequate

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
12: The protection of children standard (1) The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— (a) that staff— (i) 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 any harm to the child; (iii) have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; (v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; (vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and (vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; (b) that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm; (c) that the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded; (e) that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. In particular, make sure that effective action is taken when children present with worrying injuries, ensuring that child protection policy and processes are adhered to.	20/10/19
13: The leadership and management standard (1) The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— (a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and	20/10/19

(b) promotes their welfare. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— (a) lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; (b) ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; (c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; (d) ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; (e) ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; (f) 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; (g) demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— (i) research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and (ii) feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	
14: The care planning standard (1) The care planning standard is that children— (a) receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (c) that each child's relevant plans are followed. In addition, ensure that new and emerging concerns and needs for children are transferred into care plans and that staff fully understand what is expected of them.	20/10/19
23: Medicines (1) The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home.	20/10/19

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Relationships between established staff and children are good. Staff are warm and responsive and demonstrate the required skills to effectively communicate.

Children enjoy a variety of activities and spend time socialising together. This provides them with positive opportunities that they would not otherwise experience.

The aesthetics of the home are impressive and well thought through. Adjustments to the environment meet children's physical and sensory needs well. Children have their bedrooms personalised and prepared for their arrival. This provides them with familiarity when they are away from their homes and families.

Care planning for children requires improvement. Staff are not always provided with clear written direction about children's care. Systems are not in place to manage new and emerging needs. This results in some inconsistent care for children.

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

Improved safeguarding policies and processes are in place. Staff have had training, guidance and support to help them understand the changes. These systems are in their infancy and are not yet embedded into practice. As a result, safeguarding processes and practice requires further improvements. .

There are improvements in respect of the safe keeping and administration of medication. A more robust system is in place. This helps identify and resolve errors and discrepancies. The system continues to be reviewed to improve practice. This needs to be ingrained into day-to-day practice.

The arrangements in respect of fire safety have improved. Systems are now fit for purpose. Regular fire checks and drills take place, and this has identified and addressed areas of weakness.

Not all staff have the skills to identify and respond to concerns about children. A lack of professional curiosity remains. This results in some concerns not being escalated and, at times, procedures not being followed. Managers are aware of this and are acting to provide further training and

better oversight and challenge.

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

There has been an absence of a regular and consistent manager for several months. The registered individual has supported staff through this difficult time. This has not always been an easy task, and the service has been responsive. However, this has obstructed meaningful effective change and hindered progress.

Staff shortages have had a detrimental impact on several children and their families. Senior leaders took the difficult decision to close this service for a period over the summer. Efforts continue to employ new staff. A high level of agency staff is still used to allow this service to function. This means that children are not always cared for by staff who know them well.

The registered manager has recently tendered their resignation. The newly appointed manager demonstrates the drive, skill and ability to move this service forward. Oversight and monitoring have started with some vigour, and poor practice identified is being robustly addressed.

Concerns about staff are escalated to the designated officer in line with policy. When internal investigations have taken place, they are balanced, transparent and of good quality. Lessons learned from these situations now need to influence practice.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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, Devon EX2 4QD

Responsible individual: Glenn Lobb

Registered manager: Andrew Levett

Inspector

Tracey Ledder, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

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