

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.

A manager is in charge of the home, and they have yet to apply for registration with Ofsted.

The responsible individual was not available during this inspection.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 September 2022

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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 12 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/07/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/09/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/06/2019	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from spending time in this home. Following a period of change in the staff team, the home is now much more settled.

Staff understand the often subtle and varied individual communication techniques used by children. Children's likes and dislikes are known and recorded. All children are encouraged to make choices around aspects of their stay. Children are treated with respect and dignity.

Care plans are detailed, and children have targets for improvement. Sharing information and implementing developments with involvement from home, school and with parents improves opportunities for children to progress.

Healthcare is generally arranged by parents and carers. The staff will help with appointments if necessary. Staff frequently and effectively respond to the support needs of the children and their families.

Children enjoy activities in and away from the home. One child particularly likes going out for meals, and another enjoys visits to see trains. Several children enjoy going out and about and to the local park. The lounge is large and spacious, with plenty of room for wheelchairs and to allow children time out of wheelchairs to move about more freely and to play.

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

The staff keep children safe in this home. Risk is understood and unnecessary risk is avoided. When children display risk-taking behaviours, appropriate action is taken. Additional perimeter fencing has been added to stop a child from climbing onto other structures.

Behaviour management is focused on encouragement and praise. Staff sometimes guide the children to distract them from danger. The use of physical intervention is kept to a minimum.

Staff receive the training and support needed to care for the children. They can draw on the support of other agencies and access additional specialist training if needed. The process for training staff in the use of medical equipment is robust. Staff are tested and must be approved before they use any specialist equipment or administer medication.

Staff respond effectively to any safeguarding concerns. Suspicions of harm are shared with the appropriate agencies and handled professionally to protect children. Safe recruitment practice helps to protect children, and recruitment checks on agency staff have improved across the organisation.

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

A manager oversees the home but is not yet registered with Ofsted as required. The manager has the support and confidence of the staff team. Although new to this management role, she has the support of a deputy manager, mentor and an experienced and qualified responsible individual.

The care provided is as described in the home's statement of purpose. This document lacks detail of the experience and qualifications of the staff team and the management and staffing structure of the home. The manager took immediate action to address this.

Improvements have been made in many areas since the previous inspection. Strengths and weaknesses of the home are understood. One bedroom has been refurbished. Hospital-style trunking has been removed from walls and a new carpet has been fitted. Other areas are less homely, for example the garden has not been looked after. A sensory garden is overgrown with weeds and it was difficult to see the path. The home is equipped with the specialist equipment needed by some children.

The home has reduced the need to use agency staff and is only using those who are familiar to the children. Permanent staff receive the supervision and guidance needed to fulfil their roles and responsibilities to the children. The supervision arrangement for agency staff is unclear and not consistently applied.

An electronic recording system is in use. Most of the information can be found but it is not always recorded where expected. Recruitment records take some time to find, photos of children lack commentary and there is a danger of information getting lost.

The home has successfully worked in partnership with schools and parents or carers for years. Parents are particularly positive about the benefits to their children of spending time in this home.

Monitoring of the home by the independent visitor is contributing to improvements and addressing shortfalls.

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 registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. (Regulation 16 (1)) In particular, include details of the experience and qualifications of staff and the management and staffing structure of the home.	20 October 2022
Any person who carries on or manages an establishment or agency without being registered in respect of it (as an establishment or, as the case may be, agency of that description) shall be guilty of an offence. (Care Standards Act 2000, Section 11(1)) In particular, the manager should register with Ofsted.	20 October 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children's homes be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should have systems in place so that all staff receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. Professionally qualified staff employed by the home, e.g., teachers or social workers, should be provided with relevant professional or clinical supervision by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. In particular, the policy relating to the supervision of agency staff should be clear, and consistently applied. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

- The registered person should ensure that when ,electronic records provides information can be easily accessed by anyone with a legitimate need to view it and, if required, be reproduced in a legible form. Electronic records should be held at the individual home in accordance with data protection principles. IT systems should ensure the safe storage of these records and business continuity planning should be in place to prevent loss or damage to them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)

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: Devon County Council

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

Janice Hawtin, Social Care Inspector

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