

2529785

Registered provider: Devon County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local government authority.

The home can provide short breaks for up to five children who have learning disabilities and may also have physical disabilities and/or sensory impairment.

At the time of this inspection, two children were staying for a short break.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2019

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 February 2024

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **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: 21 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/02/2023	Full	Good
19/05/2021	Full	Good
16/12/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy their short-break visits and have a lot of fun in this home. Children benefit from a good range of activities that support their sensory needs and promote their learning and development. Staff help children to choose activities that interest them, for example model making, crafts, playing with edible slime, cooking and trampolining. 'My Story' records are kept for each child. These include photos of the children enjoying activities and provide them and their families with a wonderful record of the children's stays in the home.

Staff have a detailed understanding of the children's needs, especially in relation to how each child communicates. Augmented communication tools are used effectively by staff to help children express their views and to make choices.

Meaningful consultation with children is a strength of the provision and runs throughout the work the staff undertake. A wonderful example of meaningful consultation is how children's views are gathered to improve the environment. Staff create mood boards to gain children's feedback and help them to make choices before decorating takes place or new furniture is purchased. This same approach extends to the meals provided. A recipe book has been created that identifies each child's favourite meals.

Children make good progress in this home because each of them is set 'ambitious outcome' goals that help them to develop. Staff support children during their stays to achieve these goals. Staff spoke proudly about one child who only uses a wheelchair occasionally now because of the progress they have made to increase their independent mobility. Staff celebrate each child's achievements by awarding and displaying certificates.

Several children who visit the home have complex health needs. Staff are well trained and very skilled in meeting their needs. Staff co-work effectively with multiple agencies to understand the children's needs and provide them with the right support at the right time. Staff often support children with medical appointments and during hospital stays. The level of care given to children is recognised by families and professionals as exceptional.

Feedback from parents, social workers and other professionals is overwhelmingly positive. Parents praised the staff for their support. One parent said that, due to the progress their child has made since coming to the home, their child's future is 'looking good' as 'more doors have opened for them'. Another parent described the home as 'a fantastic place'. Professionals echoed these views. One said, 'I am always impressed by the creativity of staff to overcome any issues, come up with ideas that keep children safe and also stimulated and as independent as possible.'

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

Staff understand the additional vulnerabilities of the children they care for and have the children's safety and well-being at the centre of their work. Staff demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and are clear about the actions they would take should they have any concerns. Effective, swift action is taken when safeguarding concerns are identified. This includes working with children to develop their understanding of keeping themselves safe online.

Due to the strong relationships staff have with the children, they are skilful in helping them to communicate their feelings. Staff carefully observe children and quickly pick up on non-verbal cues that may indicate children are feeling unwell or unhappy. Staff act quickly to support children and de-escalate situations effectively. Restraint is rarely used.

Since the last inspection, there has been a reduction in the use of restrictive practices. For example, one child no longer has a visual monitor in their room at night and is now being supported by an audio monitor. Staff are helping the child to understand why such a monitor is needed, which is part of the work supporting the child to be as independent as possible.

Staff are not risk-averse. Good-quality management means risks are identified, assessed and mitigated to enable children to have good opportunities and to stay safe. Part of risk management is helping children to learn about risk and manage it appropriately where possible.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers have a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the provision. They are ambitious for the children, the staff and the home. The registered manager is very experienced and highly regarded by staff, other professionals and senior leaders.

The registered manager has implemented robust and effective systems for monitoring the quality of care. This includes gathering feedback from stakeholders about their experiences. Information obtained from monitoring activities is analysed and evaluated effectively and used for the further development of the home. However, the quality of care review report does not include details of the consultation with stakeholders.

Staff are very positive about working at the home, including the support they receive from managers and each other. They recognise managers as excellent role models who encourage them to share their views and ideas for improvements.

Staff supervision is reflective and supports staff to develop their practice. The focus of supervision is the children, but supervisors also check in on staff's well-being and provide support when needed. Records of staff supervision sessions do not

consistently reflect the discussions held. Staff team meetings take place regularly and are a good forum to discuss the children as a team and share practice ideas.

Staff receive good-quality training, which includes bespoke training linked to children's current or emerging needs. External professions are brought in to provide specialist training, ensuring that staff keep up to date with current practices.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that records of supervision sessions are of a consistently good quality and accurately reflect the discussions held. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)
- The registered person should ensure that the next quality of care review report includes evidence of consultation with stakeholders. ('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: 2529785

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Devon County Council

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

Responsible individual: Glenn Lobb

Registered manager: Louise Davey

Inspector

Wendy Anderson, Social Care Inspector

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