

2529785

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 care for up to seven children with physical disabilities and/or a learning disability and/or sensory impairment.

One child lives in the home on a full-time basis and 17 children have regular stays.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 July 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: 4 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/02/2025	Full	Good
01/02/2024	Full	Good
21/02/2023	Full	Good
19/05/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Three children were seen during the inspection. The children enjoy visiting this home and were seen to have trusting and positive relationships with staff.

Activities are well planned to ensure that children's needs are taken into account to enable them to participate fully. One child regularly attends a first aid club, and another attends the local gym every week. Throughout the holidays, the children enjoy themed weeks, which they help to plan. The home has a range of equipment available, including overhead hoists and tables that raise and lower. One sideboard in the kitchen is adjustable. This ensures that children can access all areas of the home safely and fully participate wherever they are.

A particular point of pride in the home is the garden, which has recently been renovated. The children have been involved with fundraising in the local community and have been able to buy a range of equipment and plants to enjoy. One child was keen to share their hard work and proudly talked about the sensory garden, which includes scented plants and plants with interesting textures.

The staff have positive relationships with the children's families. One parent said that the home provides a lifeline for their child. They appreciate that the children are supported to have broad experiences in a safe environment. Parents feel that the staff are dedicated and knowledgeable. They say that staff are well informed about children's complex needs and work closely with families to ensure that children are safe, comfortable and happy.

Professionals who work with the home note that the children have made good progress as a result of their short stays. They also note that the stability provided by the staff ensures that children arrive at school ready to learn. When concerns have arisen regarding the suitability of a school placement, the staff have presented these issues calmly and professionally while strongly advocating for the child's wishes and best interests. Through effective collaboration, the staff have ensured that the child's voice is heard and taken into account in decision-making processes.

Care planning is generally thorough and reflects the children's needs. Plans reflect a detailed, child-centred approach, with clear alignment between care, education and health targets. The overall care provided is responsive and reflective, with strong multi-agency collaboration and a clear focus on progress and well-being. Some plans would benefit from being more detailed. Some of the language used in the plans does not reflect the home's child-centred ethos.

The home is clean and well presented. Colourful displays on the walls celebrate children's progress, achievements and activities. Before their arrival, children's rooms are decorated individually to their tastes. During their stays, children have the same room, which helps them to feel settled and offers continuity. However, some of the fire doors need replacing or repairing. While safety is not compromised, it is important that children have access to a well-maintained environment.

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

The staff promote a strong safeguarding culture that is underpinned by robust systems for recording, reviewing and responding to incidents. Physical intervention is used only when necessary and is proportionate, with clear efforts made to understand and reduce known triggers. Staff demonstrate professional curiosity and are encouraged to be reflective and proactive in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities. There is a clear commitment to continuous learning and improvement, which enhances the quality of care and protection provided to children.

Staff demonstrate a thorough understanding of children's health needs, including those that are complex and require specialist intervention. Many children have significant health conditions, and staff are well trained and confident in meeting these needs. They speak knowledgeably about individual care plans, medication protocols and the training they have received. This ensures that children receive safe, consistent and well-informed care.

Planning for children who come to stay at the home is thorough and takes into account the needs of all children. Staff seek the views of children's families and professionals to ensure that they have a thorough understanding of the children's needs and whether the staff have the skills to meet those needs. Consideration is given to the compatibility of children who already stay in the home, to support positive peer relationships.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a committed and visible manager who fosters a strong, child-centred culture. The manager spends regular quality time with the children, including at mealtimes, and knows each child individually. One child talked about the manager helping her to feel safe.

Staff are experienced, cohesive and share a clear understanding of the home's ethos and values. They speak warmly about the children in their care and take pride in the children's and their own achievements.

The manager ensures that team meetings are held regularly. They are well attended and, alongside regular supervision, provide staff valuable opportunities for reflection and professional development. Staff report that these forums are supportive and contribute positively to their practice. Training is comprehensive and tailored to meet the children's complex medical needs. The manager maintains strong oversight of workforce

development and responds promptly to emerging training needs, ensuring that staff are well equipped to deliver high-quality care.

The home benefits from a stable and committed staff team. Although staff sickness has presented some challenges, the manager has taken proactive steps to support staff well-being. Effective internal cover arrangements ensure continuity of care.

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 registered person must ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (2)(c)) In particular, the fire doors need to be in good working order.	24 September 2025

Recommendations

- Staff should understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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

Responsible individual: Caroline Merritt

Registered manager: Sarah White

Inspector

Sally Shakespeare, Social Care Inspector

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