

# 2548794

Registered provider: Seva Childcare Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This is a privately run home for up to five children. The home's statement of purpose states that the home cares for children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and/or learning difficulties. Two children were living in the home at the time of this inspection.

The home registered with Ofsted in July 2020 and the manager registered in March 2021.

### Inspection dates: 29 and 30 June 2022

|                                                                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>good</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 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:** 10 January 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** sustained effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 10/01/2022      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness         |
| 07/06/2021      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children develop trusting relationships with adults, who provide consistent care and take the time to get to know them. Staff and managers see beyond children's presenting behaviours and are committed to helping children to make good progress, however small. The registered manager said, 'I am over the moon about the progress children have made. This has exceeded my expectations.'

Children have limited or non-verbal communication. Staff and managers use alternative communication methods such as widgeits, pictures, social stories and gestures. This enables children to express their wishes and feelings through key-work sessions and children's house meetings. Children's views are listened to and acted on by managers and staff.

Leaders and managers have adapted the section of the children's handbook regarding making complaints into a widgeit format, so that this is more accessible to the children. However, the children's guide is currently not accessible to all children, as it is not age and developmentally appropriate for all children. Therefore, staff often have to explain its contents to each child to make sure that they understand it.

All children attend the provider's education provision, established independently to the home. Support staff, including the headteacher at the school, work well with the children and staff. Children generally make progress in terms of their command of speech and understanding of language, however, this progress is variable as specific behavioural patterns and developmental levels have proved to be a challenge to the advancement of the set curriculum.

Managers and staff ensure that children participate in a wide range of activities in the home and community. This includes playing board games, enjoying a chill out/sensory space, opportunities to bake or cook, visiting the cinema and the local farm, going bowling and taking walks out to the local park. The home has a large garden area, with swings and a trampoline. Staff and managers undertake a significant amount of planning and complete risk assessments to ensure that children's experiences are positive and any potential trigger areas for children are known and understood. When possible, children's day-to-day activities, trips and meetings with family members are captured in photos, giving children with limited reading and verbal skills the opportunity to see themselves doing things with those who care for them.

Managers and staff follow children's healthcare plans in collaboration with health colleagues to ensure that children maintain good health. Children make significant progress in their health and well-being. The administering of regular medication forms an important part of children's healthcare plans and there are effective procedures in place for the management of medicines.

Managers and staff have positive working relationships with several professional services linked to children, such as psychologists, psychiatrists, speech and language therapists and occupational therapists. Managers and staff are knowledgeable in relation to the specialist services that children may need to meet their needs and they advocate on children's behalf to secure additional provision.

Managers and staff work proactively with parents and other family members to support children to maintain positive relationships with people who are important to them. Staff take children to see their parents and other family members, who also visit children at the home. A parent said that they were 'happy' and 'grateful' that their child was living in the home.

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

Due to children's significant care needs and their limited ability to communicate their needs effectively, children are particularly vulnerable to harm from others and to self-harm. Managers and staff work to individualised care plans and risk assessments to ensure that children are supervised appropriately.

Managers and staff are ambitious for the children to have the same experiences as all children and to develop resilience to cope with potentially stressful situations as part of their development. One social worker regularly meets a child in the local cafe, where the child can choose a cake and pay for it. This was not attempted by the child's previous caregivers. The social worker commented that the home, 'manages the balance between keeping [name of child] safe and giving her the opportunity to take age-appropriate risks'.

Managers and staff learn from their continuous observations and recording about children to help to promote children's positive behaviour. For one child, 'demand avoidant communication' technique is used, which involves the modelling of behaviours staff and managers wish from the child, but with minimal verbal requests. This technique has been successful in reducing the incidents of negative behaviour for this child and staff are now able to use basic commands and requests.

Managers and staff develop detailed positive behaviour support plans to ensure that children are kept safe and do not injure themselves or others. Restraint is a feature of this home and managers monitor closely the incidents of restraint and the impact of alternative methods to managing behaviour, such as the teaching of deep breathing exercises. There has been a decrease in episodes of restraint over time, which demonstrates that behaviour support plans are effective.

Leaders and managers work hard with staff to ensure that they have a clear understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. Managers use team meetings, one-to-one supervisions and case studies based on other home inspections to review staff's understanding of safeguarding procedures. Leaders and managers have planned bespoke training later in the year to address practice situations in the home and to equip staff with further knowledge and skills needed to safeguard children.

Leaders and managers take immediate action when they become aware of allegations or suspicion of harm. In one example, they acknowledged reporting procedures had not been followed and ensured that a full investigation was undertaken, with a lessons learned review completed to identify shortfalls and areas for development. Leaders and managers are aware that reporting needs to remain an ongoing agenda item for staff working in the home.

The physical environment is spacious and bright, giving children the opportunity to move freely within the home. Leaders and managers want children to experience the place they live in as their home, and so no restrictions are placed on where they can go in the home. However, due to the different needs of the children currently living at the home, one child has a dedicated TV/chill-out area on the floor they live on. All risk assessments related to the physical environment are up to date.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced and is supported in the role by an equally competent deputy manager. Leaders and managers have worked hard to recruit a permanent team of staff who are committed to ensuring that children receive high-quality continuity of care. Leaders and managers are focused on improvements in standards of care, which benefit children who have highly individualised needs.

There is strong motivation to learn from day-to-day practice and to review the quality of care provided to children. Leaders and managers have effective monitoring systems in place to inform the care provided to children. They understand that to meet the complex needs of children with autism, consultation with others who know the children well is essential. This enhances the experiences of children in the home.

Children have a range of professionals involved in their care, such as psychologists, psychiatrists and occupational therapists, as well as local authority services. Leaders and managers are effective in bringing together the knowledge and information provided by these individuals and agencies to develop and implement specific care plans to meet the needs of children. Leaders and managers keep these plans under regular review to ensure that children are supported to achieve the best outcomes possible.

Managers and staff receive regular supervision, which includes clinical sessions to address the impact of caring for children who display challenging behaviours and have complex needs. The registered manager has recently initiated group supervision and intends to make this standard practice. Staff report that they find supervision and team meetings helpful spaces to discuss children but also to address their own developmental needs.

Leaders and managers understand the importance of training in giving staff the right knowledge and skills to respond effectively to children's needs. However, one professional, who has worked closely with staff and one of the children in the home,

suggests that leaders and managers consider very specific training for staff, 'to build on the good foundation and demonstrably become more expert', in working with the types of children living at the home.

## 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          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <p>The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>develop positive relationships with them;<br/>engage with them; and</p> <p>take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>keep the children's guide and the home's complaints procedure under review and seek children's comments before revising either document; (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(c))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the children's guide being available to all children and being age appropriate, provided in an accessible format and explained to each child to make sure they understand it.</p> | 30 September 2022 |

### Recommendations

- The registered person should review the workforce development plan to ensure that the training and support offered to staff enable them to carry out their roles and responsibilities in a specialist care environment. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered person should ensure that staff working in the home understand their responsibilities with respect to recording safeguarding matters and that this remains a standing item in team meetings and other forums. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)

## **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:** 2548794

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Seva Childcare Ltd

**Registered provider address:** Seva Childcare Ltd, 71-75 Shelton Street, London WC2H 9JQ

**Responsible individual:** Mahesh Kotecha

**Registered manager:** Kimberley Bennett

## Inspector

Colin Bent, Social Care Inspector

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