

2549726

Registered provider: Worcestershire Children First

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides short breaks for children with learning disabilities and can care for up to four children on any one night.

The manager is registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 May 2023

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: 31 August 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/08/2022	Full	Good
15/03/2022	Full	Good
23/11/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, two children have been welcomed into the home through thoroughly planned transitions. Five children have moved on from the home in a planned manner and now attend provisions better suited for their needs. Staff plan and manage transitions well. They create thoughtful memory books for children to take with them when they leave.

Children receive well-planned care from staff who know them well. Staff are enthusiastic about the care children receive and ensure that children enjoy their time in the home. Staff ensure that the children's care plans capture important information and include information about how staff should engage with the children. These plans are reviewed and updated on a regular basis to ensure that the children receive individualised care based on their needs.

Children make progress through attending the home for short breaks. For some children, this is being able to come into the home and settle. For others, this means developing their peer relationships, being able to eat at the dining table and allowing staff to offer personal care. The children's progress is varied due to their individual need. However, progress is being made for every child, and this is carefully monitored and reviewed through the children's aims and targets.

Staff support children to try new things and have different experiences based on their individual needs and interests. The children make choices and plan their stays with the staff. This means that children have positive experiences during their stays. This was captured through observation and through feedback from the children and parents as part of this inspection.

The staff help children to communicate. Extensive work has been completed to better understand the different communication needs of each child accessing the home. For non-verbal children, individual communication profiles are in place, and the staff have access to communication folders that contain different tools to be used for each child. Furthermore, notice boards are used creatively as communication systems for the children and the staff to engage effectively.

The home is warm and welcoming. There is a sensory and soft playroom and large gardens, where children can enjoy games and trampolining. The children have the same bedroom during their stay, and staff prepare the room with the children's chosen bedding. Staff encourage children to bring personal items, such as toys, when they stay. This helps children personalise their rooms.

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

Children are safe. This is because staff know the children well and their individual behaviour management plans that include any associated risk. The staff keep plans

under regular review and update them to reflect new or changing behaviour. Furthermore, children are supported to understand risk and develop skills to keep themselves safe. This work is adapted to reflect the developmental and learning needs of each child.

The registered manager responds to risk. A good example of this has been seen with the challenge of the transport company and escorts used to facilitate transportation. Following an incident that occurred because of the lack of knowledge one escort had of a child, the registered manager held a meeting with the company and is in the process of finalising 'transport profiles' for all the children using the service. This will mean that children will be better known and any further risk reduced.

There has been no physical intervention used since the last inspection and no missing-from-home episodes. The children rarely have incidents, and any issues that arise are responded to quickly and effectively by the staff who follow policy and procedure.

Safer recruitment is being followed. Since the last inspection, three new staff have started, and all appropriate checks have been completed. This means that the children are cared for by safe individuals.

The sensory garden is not safe for use. Although this garden is not currently being used due to ongoing work, this is a fire escape route. Immediate action is required to ensure that the garden is safe to access and ready for use this summer.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is suitably skilled, experienced and qualified. He is highly ambitious and leads by example to ensure that children receive good-quality care that is full of opportunity and progress.

Several staff have left since the last inspection. However, these changes have allowed the staff team to develop a healthier culture. New staff receive a comprehensive induction, which covers mandatory and specialist training. The registered manager is focused on building and growing a strong staff team that shares the same passionate vision for the home and the children.

Staff receive regular supervision that supports their practice and development. The registered manager ensures that supervision is dynamic and covers areas of policy and procedure. He expects staff to take accountability for their preparation and contribution when competing group supervision. Team meetings are informative and child-focused. This means that staff work consistently.

The registered manager maintains positive relationships with families and professionals. This is achieved by good communication and collaborative working. When issues arise, the registered manager is quick to challenge and advocate on

behalf of the children. The registered manager has also shown his ability to complete restorative work when relationships break down.

The registered manager has comprehensive monitoring systems in place. He has been creative in developing additional ways to track progress for the home and for the children. This means that he has good oversight of the home and the children.

The registered manager must ensure that all documents on file are up to date and have been read and signed by all staff. At times, it is not clear if this is being done, so staff could miss important information.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d)) This specifically relates to the manager ensuring that the sensory garden is safe for children to access.	16 June 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that all children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely while they remain in the home. Case records must be kept up to date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

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: 2549726

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Worcestershire Children First

Registered provider address: County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester WR5 2NP

Responsible individual: Daniela Carson

Registered manager: Stuart Hart

Inspector

Stacie Sharpe, Social Care Inspector

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