

2587315

Registered provider: Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The service provides short breaks for up to four children who may have sensory impairment, physical disabilities or learning disabilities.

The service is dual registered with Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission.

The registered manager is a qualified learning disability nurse and holds the level 5 diploma in leadership and management for residential childcare.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 February 2024

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: 21 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/03/2023	Full	Good
09/11/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This home provides short breaks for children. Currently, there are nine children who use the short-breaks service. At this visit, two children were enjoying a short-break stay.

Children are cared for by a consistent staff team whose members know the children well. Staff are knowledgeable about the children, understand their care needs and likes and dislikes, as well as any health needs the children may have.

Staff know the children well and can pick up on the subtle cues and understand children's individual communication needs. Staff are attentive to children's needs. Staff ask their permission and seek their choices through verbal question, signing, and showing objects of reference and pictures. As a result, children feel listened to.

Despite this being a short-breaks home, children do make progress. For example, children settle well, and staffing levels are reduced as children progress. Children develop their social skills and have become more independent.

Staff help children to have enjoyable stays. Staff encourage children to take part in activities in the home, such as arts and crafts, playing games, using the sensory room and playing outside. Staff also take children out on trips to local parks, shops, swimming at the hydrotherapy pool and on train rides. This develops children's confidence and self-esteem.

Staff are creative in finding opportunities for children to socialise with others, for example going for tea or play days with children in the neighbouring short-breaks home. This helps children to learn to socialise with others, make new friends and have lots of fun.

Staff understand and promote the health needs of children. Qualified nurses oversee the health plans and care for each child.

Children who have food intolerances are supported well. Staff are proactive in making sure that appropriate foods are available before each child's stay. Staff also consider how they support children who are on healthy eating plans and encourage portion control and snacks which are healthy.

Staff take great pride in the home and make sure that it is child-friendly and welcoming. Staff ensure that children's bedrooms are personalised with bedding and items the children like. In addition, staff make sure that toys and games are readily available for each child.

Moves to the home are well planned following detailed assessments by the manager. Children have visits to support them to look around the home, join in with activities

and meet other children. This reduces children's anxieties and enables children to settle quickly.

A strength of the home is the positive working relationships that staff have with families and professionals. Feedback is positive about communication and the support provided to each child.

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

Children are kept safe by high staffing levels and staff who understand children's needs.

Managers develop plans that identify risks along with clear strategies for staff to follow. This ensures that staff provide a consistent approach and understand the actions they need to take to keep children safe. Managers regularly update these plans so that staff always have up-to-date and accurate information.

Staff use their knowledge of the children to defuse situations which may escalate. As a result, staff have not needed to use physical intervention to help keep children safe.

Children do not go missing from the home. If incidents were to occur, staff understand the actions they are required to take and the missing-from-care plans are clear.

Managers have made improvements to the way staff record marks and bruises that they see on children. Staff are recording in greater detail, using their professional curiosity, and there is clear management oversight.

The home uses monitoring equipment such as visual and audio monitors, high levels of staffing and waking night staff to help keep children safe. However, for one child there may be an overuse of visual monitoring by staff during the night. This level of monitoring may affect the child's privacy and be overly intrusive.

New staff to the home are recruited following safer recruitment procedures. However, one worker has been employed without having a full employment history. This omission means the manager does not have a full understanding of the worker's skills and knowledge from previous employments or if there are concerns about their suitability.

Actions arising from the fire risk assessment are completed by the home's estates department. The manager was not clear if all outstanding actions in this assessment had been completed. Fire records also lack sufficient detail. This is a missed opportunity to demonstrate that the home is safe and well maintained.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has worked hard to make improvements to the home. She has been instrumental in improving the home's placement plan for children and ensuring that each child has achievable targets in line with their education, health and care plan.

Staff said that they are well supported, receive regular supervision and attend a variety of training courses. The manager has planned more specialised training for staff over the next few months. This will further develop staff skills and knowledge.

Managers and staff receive support from professionals within the organisation. There is a good support system where the manager can seek additional advice and support when needed. Staff also have someone outside of the home to talk to if they have concerns or suggestions.

The manager has introduced a system for monitoring the quality of children's placement plans and how children progress with their individual targets. As a result, there is greater consistency and accountability by staff and children are progressing.

The manager seeks feedback from children, families and professionals. However, when completing the quality of care report the manager has not included how she has used feedback to improve the quality of care or developed an action plan.

Independent visitors conduct monthly visits to the home. However, the reports are not sent to each child's placing authority.

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 may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; and the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(d)) Specifically, that monitoring of children during the night is only used when absolutely necessary.	12 April 2024
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and	12 April 2024

full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d)) Specifically, that there is a full employment history, together with a satisfactory explanation of any gaps in employment, in writing.	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children’s home at least once each month. The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person’s report to— the placing authorities of children. (Regulation 44 (1) (7)(c))	12 April 2024
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children (“a quality of care review”) at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children’s home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (5)) Specifically, that the registered person considers views from children and other stakeholders and includes an action plan to improve the quality of care.	12 April 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that they comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene, etc.). Specifically, that actions from fire risk assessments show that the works have been completed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 2587315

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust

Registered provider address: Unit 2, Kings Court Business Park, Charles Hastings Way, Worcester, Worcestershire WR5 1JR

Responsible individual: Sarah Dugan

Registered manager: Amanda Ewer

Inspector

Debbie Bond, Social Care Inspector

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