

2590128

Registered provider: Seashell Trust

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a charity and provides short breaks for up to four children who may have physical disabilities, learning disabilities or sensory impairment. The home is located within a large multi-use site, which includes a special school, specialist college and accommodation for children and young adults.

The home's manager registered with Ofsted in May 2020. The post-holder has applied to cancel their registration with effect from September 2021. The provider is currently recruiting to the manager post.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 June 2021

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: Not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: Not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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The home registered with Ofsted in May 2020, this is the first inspection since registration. Prior to that date, the short-breaks service was included in the trust's whole-site children's home's registration.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive highly personalised care that meets their needs during their short breaks. The care is well informed by children, parents and multi-disciplinary professionals both on and off site. The meticulous review of children's care packages means that both small and large steps that individuals make are captured and celebrated. Children have fun, make progress and have a range of positive experiences when staying in the home, for example improving their sleep patterns, tasting food after the use of tube feeds and sampling new foods, and using talker devices to make new friends and develop relationships.

The introduction to the service is well planned and managed and closely involves the child, their families and the multi-disciplinary team from on site or from the child's home authority. Children can choose which bedroom they intend to use and build up time in the home at their individual pace.

Staff are ambitious for children and liaise well with school and family to ensure that care practice is consistent within all areas of the child's life. Parents are routinely informed of their child's overnight stay the following morning and receive regular newsletters, which they value. Care staff and senior staff contribute really well to the reviews of each child's child-in-need plan and education and healthcare plan. This helps key workers to refresh care plans and keep support programmes up to date.

Arrangements for managing medication are safe and effective, the isolated use of administering hidden medication is agreed and regularly reviewed with the prescribing clinician. Staff develop effective relationships with health professionals to promote children's good health. Carers make good use of detailed health care plans and receive specific training from clinical staff to help them meet the variety of children's health needs.

The group has been instrumental in piloting a national dental health initiative called 'Mini mouth care matters'. This programme has successfully provided dental check-ups for all children in school, which has helped support individuals who find appointments stressful and who may have previously declined to attend.

Children, irrespective of any disability they may have, enjoy access to a range of social, educational and recreational opportunities, including activities in the local community. On the day of the inspection, the children enjoyed a trip to the beach and enjoyed the summer weather and a take-away tea.

Children, including those who communicate non-verbally, are supported to actively participate in day-to-day and more complex decisions, including planning the home's menu, clothing and activity choices, and bedroom choice during introductions to the home.

Children are supported to develop their independence according to their individual needs. Suitable aids and adaptations are used by children with trained staff oversight, including, for example tracked ceiling hoists, shower seats, specialist plates and cutlery.

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

Children receive positive help and support to manage their behaviour and feelings safely. Staff respond with clear boundaries about what is safe and acceptable and seek to understand the triggers for behaviour. For example, staff use clinical advice to identify and manage episodes where a child becomes over stimulated by noise or their living environment.

Positive behaviour is consistently promoted and no sanctions are used. Staff use effective de-escalation techniques and creative alternative strategies that are specific to the needs of each child. Restraint is used only in accordance with the home's policy and training, to protect the child and those around them.

Individual risk assessments are in place and staff are familiar with the content and use the risk management strategies in practice. However, combined risk assessment formats for child sexual exploitation (CSE) and missing from home activity are confusing and do not provide the reader with a clear strategy for managing risks in these areas.

In an isolated case, information relating to CSE vulnerability for a child, contained in their child-in-need plan, is not reflected within the corresponding in-house risk assessment for that child. While this is a recording issue and the child is kept safe within the setting, crucial historical information is being missed out from the home's internal paperwork.

There has been a single missing from home incident and the home's staff and the on-site support team provided a co-ordinated response that minimised risks to the child involved. The leaders and managers immediately made suitable changes to policy and procedures to prevent any repeated incidents.

The setting's complaints policy is easy to understand, accessible and child focused. There have been no complaints received by the service.

Suitable health and safety checks are regularly completed to keep the premises safe for children and staff to use. The fire safety risk assessment is a blanket document covering all of the children's residential homes on the site and is not individual to the setting. This makes it difficult for staff to appreciate the fire control measures specific to their place of work. Furthermore, the additional door lock, added as a safety measure after the missing from home episode, is not included in the fire safety risk assessment as required.

Careful recruitment of staff prevents unsuitable people from working in the setting. The registered manager has good oversight of the suitability checks completed on those staff from the wider site deployed to work in the short-breaks setting.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers have worked hard to establish the short-breaks service as a stand-alone setting within the cross-site provision. This means that the setting provides bespoke care to children, whilst still operating within the trust's policies and procedures. Senior staff have adapted plans well during the COVID pandemic, closing for a short while and then resuming with reduced numbers of children within identified 'bubbles'. This means that children and families have continued to receive care and support during a really challenging year.

The tangible motivation and energy from the leadership team mean that the staff feel re-energised in their work and operate as a cohesive team to deliver consistent care and support to children. The team is meeting the aims and objectives within the service's statement of purpose and maintains an ambitious vision for service development.

Leaders and managers closely monitor the progress that individual children make and can demonstrate the positive impact that staying in the home has had on individual children's progress.

The service maintains the agreed adult-child ratio in all shifts and meets the needs of the children, with the occasional use of support staff from the wider site. However, care staff access to senior support in-shift to manage emerging issues or to provide cover is very limited, as all three senior care staff, when on rota, are counted in the child-adult ratio. While the manager and deputy manager do work on site outside of office hours, their visibility in the home can be reduced as their office space is situated outside the home. Both managers have worked hard to overcome this issue, as they both keep fully informed about the service's day-to-day activity and are highly knowledgeable about individual children.

Staff are suitably qualified and trained and deliver high-quality personal care to children and support to their families. Regular supervision and team meetings support staff to reflect on their practice with individual children and help to plan staff development.

The external monitoring of the home has been enhanced with the inclusion of stakeholder input and feedback. The leadership team responds well to the visitor's report and uses the feedback to constructively improve practice in the home. The registered manager's insightful practice monitoring includes learning from critical incidents to improve care for children. The manager's plans to further inform his quality review with professional and family feedback have been delayed due to COVID restrictions, and therefore the impact of those initiatives cannot yet be measured.

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 Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 applies to the home— the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b)). With specific reference to ensuring that the home's fire safety risk assessment is specific to the house, that it includes the patio door locking measure, and that the assessment is shared with the local authority fire safety officer.	30 September 2021
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(2)(c)). With specific reference to ensuring that child-in-need plans containing information regarding child sexual exploitation (CSE) are reflected in the home's own CSE risk assessment document.	30 September 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that those with a leadership and management role are visible and accessible to staff and able to deliver their leadership and management responsibilities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.7). With specific reference to the provider considering whether senior care staff should be supernumerary on shift and the provision of in-house office facilities for the registered manager and deputy manager.

- The registered person should ensure that staff record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4). With specific reference to the provider reconsidering the combined CSE and missing from home risk assessment document.

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: 2590128

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Seashell Trust

Registered provider address: Stanley Road, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, Cheshire
SK8 6RQ

Responsible individual: Jolanta McCall

Registered manager: Steven Ince

Inspector

Karen Forster, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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