

2602980

Registered provider: Cambridgeshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by the local authority. It provides short breaks for up to four children with a moderate to severe learning disability. One of the four children being cared for can live at the home permanently.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2020.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 August 2022

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 December 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/12/2021	Interim	Improved effectiveness
23/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children and their families benefit positively from the stays that children have at this home. Parents speak highly of the care that children receive, which builds trust and provides assurance for children and their parents. Children really enjoy the wide range of activities offered, including special days out during school holidays. The manager works hard to establish close partnership working between the home, schools and families. This helps to establish consistency in approach to support children with complex disabilities.

Careful planning takes place when a request for support is made. This includes working closely with parents and social workers to build a good understanding of children's needs. Children visit the home on several occasions, and staff visit children at their family home and school. The planning for children's breaks is good. This means that when children start to stay overnight, they are comfortable to do so and have begun to build relationships with staff.

The manager and staff know children well and carefully plan to ensure that children are suitably matched as a group when staying for a short break. The manager works closely with families to provide support that meets all the families' wider needs. This benefits children because parents can plan to include focused quality time together. Parents say that they appreciate the manager's flexible approach to making changes or providing additional support when needed.

Children make progress in building their independence skills. Success is celebrated with certificates and rewards. Targets in education, health and care plans are set jointly with families and schools. Staff use everyday tasks as development opportunities for children. For example, children visiting the local shop are always encouraged to make choices, using communication aids to make their purchase. Staff support children to handle money and interact with the shopkeeper when paying. This helps children to build confidence and develop essential life skills.

Some children have highly complex healthcare needs and sensory impairments. Clear and detailed plans support staff to manage these. However, monitoring of the temperature at which medicines are stored is not consistently recorded. One medicine administration record does not give clear information.

The home is child friendly and safe for children. Improvements have been made to outdoor spaces, which have a paddling pool and shaded areas to protect children from the sun and hot weather. Children's rooms are personalised for when they come to stay. However, the decoration is worn in several places and the kitchen is overdue for replacement. Some windows have been broken and have had emergency boarding in place for several weeks. Progress has been slow in addressing this, due to national supply shortages. The manager has pushed hard for these works to move forward, and they are now due for completion this year.

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

Parents say they feel that their children are safe when staying at the home. All staff undertake training in safeguarding and identifying risks to children; they know how to keep the children safe. All staff know how to report concerns to the provider or external agencies to help to protect children.

Risk assessments are clear for staff to follow and include the risks to children and the actions to mitigate these. Learning from incidents is used to further develop care plans and is discussed with staff during meetings and supervision sessions.

The children are at low risk of going missing from the home or being exposed to criminal exploitation. However, there are clear plans should a child go missing from the home. Staff have a good understanding of risks to children, including the additional vulnerabilities of learning disabilities and communication needs.

Recruitment processes are robust and ensure that applicants are suitable to work with vulnerable children. Interviews with prospective staff explore how the applicant, if appointed, would treat children with kindness and respect.

There are suitable levels of staffing to ensure that children remain safe. This includes monitoring health conditions, such as epilepsy or respiratory conditions. When appropriate, staff use video monitoring devices to alert them should a child need an urgent response. These are only used as the least restrictive option in the best interests of the child. However, the provider does not have a suitable policy in place, as required, to ensure the proper management of these devices.

Staff help children when they are distressed. They follow agreed approaches stated in children's care plans. This helps children to calm and reduces the risk of increased distress. The use of physical interventions is rare, and staff are clear that this is always as a last resort to keep children or others safe. However, one record used to review an incident does not contain the required times and dates to confirm that children have been consulted in a timely way. This record is not consistent with the information in the incident form.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is highly regarded by children, their families, and staff. The manager is suitably experienced and qualified and focused on the well-being of children. Staff value the strong team spirit and supportive morale that the manager has fostered. The manager has made wide-ranging improvements to the care over the past two years. This includes increasing support from four to 14 children and their families.

The manager has good systems to ensure effective monitoring of the quality of care. There is effective oversight of incidents, which is used to inform learning and improvement. The manager has a clear vision for the development of the home,

which includes succession planning and development of senior staff's management skills.

Children's views are valued and sought. Children can raise complaints or grumbles, which are dealt with by the manager. The manager is responsive to children's feedback, for example increasing the activities on offer to include trips to theme parks and the seaside during school holidays.

Staff team meetings and supervision sessions are regular and effective, and they focus on the children's experiences. Supervision takes place with agency workers; however, the use of agency staff is limited following successful staff recruitment and improved retention. These supervision meetings encourage staff to reflect on their practice.

Staff enjoy working at the home. They are motivated to provide good-quality care so that children enjoy their lives and make progress. There is a strong sense of teamwork and mutual support among staff.

There is a sufficient number of staff to meet the children's needs. Staff are flexible and amend shift patterns to reduce the need for agency staff. This helps children to receive consistent care from staff who they know well.

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 registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the temperature at which medicines are stored is monitored and maintained to the manufacturer's instruction. Also, ensure that instructions for administration clearly detail how medicines are to be administered.	30 September 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is well maintained. In particular, they should ensure that planned kitchen refurbishments take place. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that there is a written policy which describes how closed-circuit television or other monitoring equipment will support the safeguarding and well-being of those living and working at the home, in accordance with regulation 24. The home must gain written consent to any monitoring or surveillance by the placing authority at the time of placement. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.16)
- The registered person should ensure that any child who has been restrained is given the opportunity to express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, ideally within 24 hours of the restraint incident. The age of the child and the circumstances of the restraint should be taken into account. In some cases, children may need longer to work through their feelings, so a record that the child has talked about their feelings should be made no longer than five days after the incident of restraint. In particular, the registered person should ensure that all records relating to the use of restrictive physical interventions include the dates that the child was consulted. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 50, paragraph 9.60)

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: 2602980

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Sunley House, Summers Hill Drive, Papworth
Everard, Cambridge CB23 3AB

Responsible individual: Mark Leadbetter

Registered manager: Deborah Shaw

Inspector

Jamie Cousins, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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