

2602980

Registered provider: Cambridgeshire County Council

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority-run home 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 date: 21 December 2021

Date of last inspection: 23 August 2021

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judged that it has improved effectiveness.

The manager has addressed all five of the requirements that were raised at the full inspection. One new requirement and two recommendations have been raised at this inspection.

The experiences of children are positive, and they enjoy their short breaks. The staff provide individualised support that children and parents value highly.

Since the last inspection, two children have started accessing short breaks. These moves were well planned and sensitive to the children's individual needs. The manager ensures that the children are suitably matched with each other and with the staff's skills and experience. Effective impact assessments are completed. As a result, children benefit from organised introductions and settle quickly into established routines.

The children enjoy a wide range of meaningful activities, despite the restrictions arising from COVID-19. Recent visits to theme parks, sea life centres, zoos, trips to the cinema, ice skating, regular swimming sessions and seeing a local firework display have widened children's experiences. These activities extend children's interests and give them opportunities that they have not had previously.

Communication with parents and families has improved. Staff have gained feedback and identified family members' preferences for the level of updates that they need during a child's short break. This ensures that families benefit from an individualised approach. Communication diaries have been monitored by the management team and are now filled in consistently. Families spoken with during the inspection highlighted that this area of practice is now stronger. Consequently, there is more effective partnership working to meet children's needs.

Managerial monitoring activities have been enhanced. The manager now has consistent oversight of behavioural incidents. This has led to effective reviews of children's risk assessments that contribute to informed risk-reduction strategies. Frameworks for monitoring care planning processes identify children's health and education needs more accurately, with gaps quickly identified and addressed. This supports consistency in staff's practice and helps children to begin to make progress towards their health and education targets.

The manager has adapted the process for staff supervision. These sessions now include opportunities to discuss children's progress and how their needs can be more effectively met. Regularly used agency staff now have supervisions in line with

the home's policy. Child-focused supervisions ensure that staff receive the support that they need to provide good-quality care.

The home has appointed a new independent person to undertake external monitoring visits. The visit reports include feedback from families and professionals and provide a stronger level of scrutiny to drive improvements in care.

The home is well equipped to meet children's individual needs. Sensory rooms and specialised play equipment are greatly enjoyed by the children who stay. Two bathrooms have been refurbished since the last inspection. However, overall, there are still areas of the home that need attention, including flaking paint in hallways and work required to adjust perimeter fences to make them safer. Despite these shortfalls being raised at the last inspection and work being planned, there is also still no agreed date for the scheduled kitchen refurbishments to take place.

Although risk assessments have been regularly monitored and updated, children's behaviour management strategies are not subject to the same level of consideration. Staff have not reviewed strategies in line with pre-determined timescales or children's emerging behaviours. This delay reduces the staff's capacity to understand or adapt proactive strategies to respond effectively to children's behavioural and emotional needs.

The home's statement of purpose has been revised to reflect changes to the staff team. However, this revision was not sent to Ofsted as required.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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— notify HMCI of any revisions [to the statement of purpose] and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(b))	28 January 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 behaviour management strategies are kept under review and revised when appropriate. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.34)

Information about this inspection

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full 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: Cambridgeshire County Council

Registered provider address: Shire Hall, Cambridge CB3 0AP

Responsible individual: Wendi Ogle-Welbourn

Registered manager: Deborah Shaw

Inspector

Mark Anderton, Social Care Inspector

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