

2642643

Registered provider: Derbyshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a local authority. The home is registered to provide care for up to 4 children with social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, 4 children were living at the home. All children were spoken to during the inspection.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 January 2026

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: 4 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/03/2025	Full	Good
10/10/2023	Full	Good
14/02/2023	Full	Good
08/03/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children live in a home that is well presented and comfortable. It provides ample space for children to spend time together or independently, as they wish. Children are actively consulted about the home environment and have opportunities to express their views, ideas and opinions. The children's bedrooms are personalised and decorated to reflect each child's individual style, promoting a sense of ownership and belonging.

Children are encouraged to understand the importance of education and learning. Most children attend education provisions that are suited to their individual needs. When children are not accessing education, staff work proactively with them to explore alternative options and pathways. Children's wishes and feelings are central to decision-making about their education, ensuring that plans reflect their aspirations and abilities.

Children are welcomed into the home in a caring and supportive manner. Where possible, transitions are carefully planned to allow staff time to build positive relationships with children before they move in. Children already living in the home are consulted about new admissions and are spoken to again once new children have settled. When children move on from the home, staff provide sensitive and well-planned support to help them prepare for leaving, ensuring transitions are managed in a reassuring way.

Staff invest time in building trusting relationships with children. Staff communicate with children in a caring and respectful manner. Conversations are thoughtfully written as letters to children. This demonstrates a child-centred and nurturing approach.

Children do not raise complaints. However, they can identify adults they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns. Children said that they feel safe in their home. As a result, children feel comfortable sharing their worries and concerns and actively seek out staff, including the manager, for support.

When children are not living harmoniously together, staff hold careful and sensitive conversations with children. Children are encouraged to reflect on each other's feelings and to understand the impact of their behaviour on others. Staff make effective use of themed events, such as Anti-Bullying Week, to reinforce positive relationships, promote respect, and help children develop strategies to manage conflict appropriately.

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

When children go missing from the home, staff take immediate and proactive steps to locate them quickly. This includes searching known locations and addresses. Children are reported to the police in line with their individual care plans. On their return home, children are welcomed back and are offered opportunities to explore the reasons for going missing, helping staff to understand risks and inform future safeguarding planning.

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of risks to children and actively support them to keep safe. Safer care plans generally contain appropriate information about children's known risks and vulnerabilities. The plans are updated, as needed, to reflect children's evolving needs. However, for one child's known risk of self-harm, their safe care plan does not provide detailed steps staff should take if the child has self-harmed.

Staff take timely and appropriate action to safeguard children. Staff help children to understand why certain behaviours may cause concern and support them to develop strategies to keep themselves safe. There is strong management oversight of incidents, which considers the effectiveness of staff practice as well as potential triggers for children's behaviour. This reflective approach ensures that learning informs future planning and that children receive the most appropriate support moving forward.

Consequences, when used in the home, are natural and restorative. However, these are not consistently recorded in a way that allows for effective oversight. As a result, managers are not routinely able to review or comment on whether consequences are appropriate and proportionate.

When children raise concerns about staff, prompt and appropriate action is taken to ensure their voices are heard. Investigations are carried out thoroughly, and information is shared with the team around the child and with the local authority designated officer. Referrals are made in a timely manner, and communication with external professionals is effective. This demonstrates robust safeguarding practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a manager who is ambitious for both staff and children. The manager maintains very good oversight of the home, and is aware of the strengths and the areas for development.

Staff are up to date with mandatory training. This includes safeguarding. However, staff training in understanding self-harm has not been refreshed to reflect changes in the needs of the children. Although incidents have reduced for one child, staff have not received updated training in this area.

Staff receive regular supervision and have access to regular team meetings, which they describe as being supportive and beneficial. Sessions provide dedicated opportunities to discuss children in detail and enable staff to reflect on their own practice. As a result, staff are increasingly confident in their roles and continue to develop and improve their practice to meet children's individual needs.

The manager demonstrates confidence in raising concerns with professionals when decisions are not in the best interests of children. This proactive approach has been recognised as a real strength by an independent reviewing officer, highlighting the manager's commitment to advocating effectively on behalf of children.

Staff feel well supported by the management team and their colleagues. They report confidence in raising concerns with managers and are assured that any issues will be taken seriously.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair and the above principles as set out in 9.35 are respected. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)
- The registered person should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert to any signs that might indicate that a child is in any way at risk of harm. The registered person should ensure that skills in safeguarding and children's individual needs are gained and refreshed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)

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: 2642643

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Derbyshire County Council

Registered provider address: County Offices, Matlock DE4 3AG

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Lyn Blackham

Inspector

Jess Baines, Social Care Inspector

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