

2647153

Registered provider: West Sussex County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by the local authority and provides care for up to six children with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. The home consists of a four-bedroomed house and a separate two-bedroomed bungalow for children working towards independent living. At the time of this inspection, there were five children living in the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2021 and holds the relevant qualification.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
---	-------------

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
---	-------------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 14 December 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/12/2022	Full	Good
15/02/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, three children have moved on from the home. One child came to live at the home because their previous home was closing and their new home was not yet ready. The staff worked jointly with the child's team from their previous setting to provide support and consistency as they moved on to adult services, to ensure that this was a successful move. Due to a change in children's care planning, two children have moved on from the home to better meet their emerging care needs. All children who have moved made progress while living at the home and their moves were appropriate and well managed.

Children make good progress with their education. For example, one child who did not attend school before moving to the home has recently taken an exam early due to the progress they have made. Another child is waiting to join college in the next academic year, having recently moved to the home.

Children are supported with their personal preferences and choices around identity. This includes preferred pronouns. Difference is explored and children share their thoughts around related topics, such as equal rights. For example, there is a poster on the fridge that one of the children has made to explain the rights and laws around different sexuality. This promotes an open culture where children feel respected and valued.

The staff support children to be active and healthy and have fun experiences in the local surrounding areas. For example, they have recently introduced water sports for the children at the local beach and provided additional training for staff to facilitate these activities.

There is a personalised plan for children who live in the annexe as part of their journey to adulthood. The staff sit with children and review the skills they will need to successfully manage this next stage of their lives, and support them to cook meals and travel independently.

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

Senior leaders have taken effective action to support staff to manage children's behaviours to ensure that all the children are safeguarded. The staff have completed targeted work with the children to help them understand the impact of their behaviours and to teach them strategies to make better choices.

The support for the well-being and emotional needs of the children and staff is excellent. There are regular meetings with the children, their key workers and the in-house psychologist to review the children's emotional needs and to support their care planning. This support is extended to the staff individually, and during regular consultations and team meetings.

The staff promote positive behaviour and key workers use incentives to help children achieve their goals. This is alongside the use of appropriate consequences for children's unwanted behaviour. However, on some occasions, the views of the child have not been explored to reflect the impact and effects of the consequence, which is a missed opportunity to further review the effectiveness of these.

The staff are proactive and look for children if they go missing from home, and encourage them to return home safely with constant communication. The manager advocates for return home discussions to be carried out and, where there are increasing concerns about missing-from-home incidents, the manager escalates these concerns to the child's social worker to ensure effective joint working.

The home is a large and spacious environment. Children can personalise their bedrooms with posters and soft furnishings, but they have not been able to decorate or paint the walls in their chosen colours. Additionally, some children require further support from staff to maintain the cleanliness of their bedrooms.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager has been away from the home due to unforeseen circumstances and has just returned. In his absence, an interim manager has led the home with support from the responsible individual. This time of change has been managed extremely well and is a reflection of the registered manager's work to enable the smooth running of the home in his absence. A social worker said that her child has positive relationships with staff and that staff have provided consistency and stability and respond to safeguarding needs. The commitment from managers and staff shines through in the care given to children.

Staff are extremely well supported and are overwhelmingly positive about the 'incredible' support they receive from senior leaders, managers and each other. They enjoy their roles and supporting the children. There is regular opportunity for supervision and follow-up discussions and support after any difficult incidents to ensure that staff's well-being is considered.

There is a comprehensive induction for staff when they first join the home. This is complemented by further learning and development. This investment in staff has led to career progression for many members of the team, enabling them to step up into team leader and management roles.

The interim manager has listened and responded to complaints made by children. Mediation work has been carried out sensitively and focused on what matters to children, for example joint living and being respectful of one another. This has improved relationships between children and ensured that they feel listened to.

The children's and staff's achievements are celebrated across the network of homes in award ceremonies. Additionally, one child in the home represents the collective children's homes for the county in a Children in Care Council and is improving the

lives and experiences of children in care through their work. This is complemented by meetings with the responsible individual to implement changes across the county. The responsible individual takes on board how children in care are affected by their experiences and what positive changes senior decision-makers can take to drive change.

The manager has effective systems in place to ensure the oversight of children's care. This is achieved by regular reviews and consultation with senior staff who have delegated responsibilities. A review and evaluation of the quality of children's care has been completed by the interim manager, although this would be better informed by demonstrating the views of children and other important stakeholders. However, communication with professionals is excellent and children regularly share their views with staff. One child told the inspector that they can talk to staff if they need to and that they are happy living in the home.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any consequences used to address poor behaviour help children to recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. In some cases, it will be important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour, and the staff in the home should be skilled to support the children to understand this and carry it out. The registered person should ensure that they seek the views of children during this process. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', pages 46 and 47, paragraph 9.38)
- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children living there, and is a homely, domestic environment. In particular, ensure that standards are maintained and children's views are sought on the decor of their bedrooms. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should conduct a review of the quality of care at least every six months. The review should enable the registered person to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the home's care, which will be captured in the written report. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next six months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home and consider the views of children and other stakeholders as part of the review. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

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: 2647153

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: West Sussex County Hall

Registered provider address: County Hall, West Street, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1RG

Responsible individual: Julian Skeates

Registered manager: Eerik Sjostedt

Inspector

Sara Stoker, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023