

2778841

Registered provider: Hull City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a local authority. It provides short breaks for up to six children who may have sensory impairment and learning and/or physical disabilities.

At the time of the inspection, the home supported 36 children to have short breaks. On the days that the inspector visited, two children were at the home for overnight stays, and one child was living at the home on an emergency arrangement.

A suitable, qualified manager registered with Ofsted in March 2024.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 October 2025

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

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

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

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 25 September 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/09/2024	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Staff have an excellent understanding of each child's individual needs, including those whose needs are most complex. They provide reliably high-quality care that enables all children to feel secure, valued and understood. The setting is calm, nurturing and emotionally safe, creating a strong sense of belonging. Children make significant progress from their starting points, and their achievements are actively recognised and celebrated.

Children have trusted and secure relationships with the staff who look after them during their stays. Support is personalised, ensuring that each child, no matter how complex their needs, is exceptionally well looked after. This is the same for children on emergency arrangements who may stay for a few nights. They have developed relationships in a short space of time, which help them to feel safe and secure. One child said, 'This was the first place in months I felt safe in. If I could, I would have stayed.'

Support for children's communication is shaped to individual needs. There are many different visual resources, such as symbols, choice boards and cushions with facial photos and the corresponding feelings. Staff use these with children to empower them to say what they want, ensuring children's voices are listened to and heard.

Children with complex health conditions have all aspects of their health needs met. For example, staff support complex medication, tube feeding and physio regimes. Various professionals come to the service to give training to staff. Some children have specific plans in relation to their conditions such as epilepsy, ensuring that staff know how to respond on a day-to-day basis or in an emergency. This keeps children safe and secure during their stay.

Personal care is provided in a sensitive and inclusive manner. The child is involved as much as possible. Staff take the time to talk through their actions, so nothing is a surprise for the child. This ensures that the child's dignity and privacy are preserved as much as possible.

Staff take the time to include children in experiences they do not usually have at home, giving them a say in what happens in their day-to-day lives. For example, one child's dream was to go to a football match, and the staff made this happen. The short-stays disability 'Pride' festival was held over several days to make sure many of the children could enjoy this. This allows them to have everyday experiences irrespective of their disability and helps promote variety, supporting links to the local area.

Relationships with families are incredibly strong. Foster carers and families who rely on the service highly value the support. They feel included in decisions for their children, are supported by staff and are kept up to date. They feel reassured that the children's

routines in the family home are replicated when they come for short breaks. This is essential for the children who need a high level of consistency.

Outreach support is a particular strength of the service. Staff go above and beyond to support families with appointments, giving help at difficult times when children might become distressed or upset. One child has been supported significantly during hospital stays by staff staying with him to make sure he is not on his own.

There is some variation in how staff write about children. Most of the time this is very good and helpful to the child. However, there was some unhelpful professional language used in documents. This is an area for improvement.

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

Staff understand each child, their usual behaviour and anything that might be out of the ordinary. They recognise these nuances in behaviour to reflect children's different ways of communicating and the fact that some children are not able to express their needs at the time. Staff's consistent curiosity helps them understand what children are trying to say, reducing the children's sense of anxiety.

Behaviour is supported in the home through strategies such as talking, modelling or giving children space to calm. When children are upset, staff use these strategies to help them understand and manage their feelings. This is successful most of the time in calming the situation. Feelings are validated, and staff show understanding for those who have experienced childhood trauma.

Children at short breaks are supported on a one-to-one or two-to-one basis. This reduces risks for the children both at the short breaks and when out in the community. However, there have been some challenges with children who have stayed via emergency arrangements. Staff have had to manage issues around self-harm and missing-from-home episodes. Additional advice, training and support have been sourced to help increase staff's knowledge and skills. Staff work hard during times of crisis to support children to be safe. When this is not successful, staff ensure that children have access to additional support that they need, such as medical help or the crisis team.

There are appropriate plans and risk assessments for emergency placements before a child moves in. However, one risk assessment was not updated, even after incidents when staff knew more about a child. Although staff actions at times of crisis were appropriate and effective, this was not reflected in the documents that offer guidance about emergency care.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager has created a culture of optimism, positivity and advocacy for children, whether on short breaks or emergency arrangements. She has high aspirations for children, wanting the best outcomes. She encourages the team to do the same. The

inclusive culture filters down from the manager, significantly influencing the staff who care for the children.

The manager is creative. She considers what children need, does her own research and then creates a plan to achieve it. She strongly advocates on behalf of children, ensuring they have what they deserve and need. Her challenge to others has recently helped the local authority consider the wider support needed to help a child on an emergency break and support their emotional well-being in a more inclusive way.

Moves on from emergency arrangements are very well planned. This is done in collaboration with the staff. Support plans help with the significant change, even at short notice. This includes visual aids to explain to the child what is happening and where they are going. Some children continue to keep in contact with the team and want them to know how they are getting on, demonstrating the impact staff have had on children's lives.

Staff are highly responsive to children's needs and changes. Information is shared across the team and with wider professionals as needed to maintain high levels of consistency. This is essential for children at the short breaks whose needs and health can vary from week to week.

Staff are very happy working at short breaks. The team is stable, and this ensures a high level of consistency for the children during their stays. Children know who is going to be looking after them. Staff feel exceptionally well supported by the manager. They also feel they work incredibly well together as a team.

The manager and staff work collaboratively with professionals around the children. Feedback from these professionals is excellent. Professionals say they wish the short breaks were able to help more children, as it is such a vital service. The team is seen as a very important service that makes a significant difference to the children's and families' lives.

Despite escalation, the manager has had some challenges in getting two of the children's education, health and care plans from the local authority. The manager has mitigated this by ensuring that working relationships with the schools are excellent and by going to educational meetings, so there is no impact on the children. However, there is a need for further challenge to those who should provide this information.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when a support service does not provide the input and services needed to meet a child's needs, managers and staff challenge them to meet the child's needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8)
- The registered person should ensure that staff is continually and actively assessing the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Plans must include accurate details of the steps staff will take to manage any assessed risks. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that information about the child is always recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 2778841

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Kingston upon Hull City Council, The Guildhall, Alfred Gelder Street, Hull HU1 2AA

Responsible individual: Michael Boddy

Registered manager: Rebecca Spaven

Inspector

Miriam Dolman, 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 looked after children, 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 www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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 2025