

2784664

Registered provider: Surrey County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides care for up to two children who experience social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, one child was living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2024.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 October 2025

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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 25 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/02/2025	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The child enjoys warm relationships with staff who know them well. The child gave positive feedback about living at the home and the support they receive from staff. The caring relationships that have been established have helped the child to have stability and to make progress in areas such as emotional regulation and self-care.

The child's individual interests and enthusiasms are known and nurtured. Staff support the child to pursue their chosen activities, such as go-karting and motorcycling, and help them understand and manage the risks involved. The child's experiences and achievements are celebrated and recorded in their memory book. This helps the child to have a positive sense of identity and self-efficacy.

Staff routinely seek, and show interest in, the child's wishes and feelings. This is evidenced through regular 'voice of the child' records and one-to-one key-work sessions. The key-working sessions include staff consulting with the child and how staff provide guidance in relation to issues relevant to the child.

Staff promote age-appropriate responsibility for the child in relation to their health. They show perseverance and flexibility when needed to encourage the child to access treatment if they are struggling to do so.

Staff help the child to develop independent living skills and to plan for the future in line with their local authority care plan and wishes. The child has a clear programme of support in this area and is being suitably helped to explore options for next steps towards their longer-term goal of independent living.

Staff value and promote the child's important relationships. They communicate well with family members to ensure that this time works as well as possible for the child. For example, staff accompanied the child on a trip to Spain to visit their parent.

The child is not currently in education or training. However, managers and staff work closely with education colleagues to promote learning, to consider alternative options and to advocate for the child when required. Staff are proactive in researching possibilities and in seeking to engage the child in thinking about their goals. Such support helped the child to re-enter education for a period of time.

The home is comfortable. It is in good repair and is furnished in a child-friendly manner. The child is helped to personalise their space. The child's achievements and experiences are celebrated through photos in the communal areas of the home, promoting a sense of belonging and ownership of their environment.

The need for the child's door alarm has been reviewed since the last inspection and is not currently in use. However, other internal door alarms are used at night and

electronic locks are still in place in some shared spaces. This practice has not been reviewed regularly and there is no clear or current rationale for this approach. These measures impact on the homeliness of the environment and limit the child's access to some areas of the home.

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

Staff have a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and the child's individual vulnerabilities. Systems for communicating new developments or changes to safety plans work well in this small team. Managers have prompt oversight of safeguarding incidents to review practice and ensure that protocols are followed.

There is effective joint working with partner agencies in relation to the management of risks. Managers and staff share developments and concerns promptly and openly with other agencies. This includes the child's placing authority and the police, and managers seek to involve specialist services where relevant. This helps to ensure that risks to the child, for example in relation to sexual exploitation, are understood and receive a coordinated response.

If the child goes missing from the home, staff are proactive in seeking to find them and engage the help of others, such as the police and the child's family members, to do so. Staff conduct prompt follow-up work with the child on their return to the home. Consequently, such episodes of going missing from the home are managed as safely as possible, and the child is assisted to make safer choices. Support in this area has led to a reduction in incidents of the child going missing from the home. However, return home interviews are not always carried out by the placing authority and managers do not consistently request these. This is a missed opportunity to fully understand why the child went missing.

Managers have not always followed up the outcomes of child protection investigations promptly and notified the regulator. In one instance, this resulted in a lack of clarity about how concerns can be shared with the child. This has hampered direct work with them.

Staff take a positive approach to the management of behaviour. They help the child to understand expectations and to consider the impact of their behaviour on others. There is no use of physical intervention, which is a positive indicator of how staff work to help de-escalate situations and support the child to calm.

Staff use consequences and rewards with the child to encourage acceptable behaviour, and these are linked to the child's care plan. Consequences are generally proportionate and 'natural'. However, they are not consistently recorded, which means they are not subject to the required level of scrutiny and management oversight.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home is led by a suitably qualified registered manager and is assisted by an experienced deputy manager. Staff speak positively about managers, including senior managers, and the support they receive from them and other team members.

Staff and managers understand the importance of relationships with the child's personal and professional networks. Professionals and family members provided positive feedback about care, safeguarding and communication. Consequently, the child receives coordinated care, and benefits from the harmonious adult relationships around them.

Permanent staff receive regular supervision with a manager, which affords space to consider staff's well-being, development and practice. The structure for staff support also includes regular team meetings, which provide a constructive forum for reflection and promoting positive team dynamics. However, staff appraisals and probation reviews are not carried out in line with company policy. There is no system in place to ensure that bank staff receive regular supervision. This weakens systems for staff support and oversight of practice.

Staff are required to complete a range of training to guide them in their roles. This training is relevant to the needs of the child in the home and covers essential areas such as safeguarding and first aid. Staff's progress with training, and their progress with qualifications, is effectively monitored through individual supervision. This helps to ensure that children are cared for by well-informed staff.

Monthly visits are completed by an independent person. Managers respond constructively to their recommendations. However, the independent person does not consider the views of the relatives of the child and one report was not sent to the regulator as required.

Before new staff start, managers conduct a range of recruitment checks to confirm that they are suitable to work with children. This covers most areas of the regulations, although the reasons for leaving previous roles with children or vulnerable adults are not consistently verified.

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, The 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to understand how to keep safe; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(ii)(vii)) In particular, ensure that the outcomes of child protection enquiries are clarified promptly to inform educative work with children in relation to identified risks and that such work progresses without delay. In particular, ensure that the regulator is notified when a child protection enquiry begins and ends.	10 December 2025
The registered person must ensure that— the privacy of children is appropriately protected; children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and	10 December 2025

allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21(a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iv)) In particular, this refers to the use of internal door alarms and locks on the doors of shared spaces.	
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and	10 December 2025

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, this refers to the recording and review of the use of consequences.	
The registered person must— ensure that each permanent appointment of an employee is subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation. The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (1)(b) (4)(b)(c))	10 December 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should request an independent return home interview, from the relevant placing authority, when a child returns after being missing from the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure that thorough safer recruitment checks are conducted in line with regulations. This includes ensuring that the reasons for leaving any previous roles with children or vulnerable adults are verified as far as is reasonably practical to do so. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should ensure that the independent person makes a rigorous assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. This should include obtaining the views of the relatives of children, where appropriate. The registered person should ensure that each report is provided to Ofsted. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: 2784664

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Surrey County Council

Registered provider address: Woodhatch Place, 11 Cockshot Hill, Reigate RH2 8EF

Responsible individual: Sharon Newton

Registered manager: Vincent White

Inspector

Jacob Robson, Social Care Inspector

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