

2791102

Registered provider: Oxfordshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a local authority. It provides care for up to 4 children aged 12 to 17 with a wide variety of emotional and learning needs.

At the time of the inspection, there were 4 children living at the home.

The interim manager has applied for registration with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 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: 26 November 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/11/2024	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff demonstrate a strong and consistent commitment to supporting children. Children are listened to, and their views are actively sought and used to inform plans and day-to-day support. As a result, children feel valued and develop trusting relationships with staff.

Managers and staff work effectively with external agencies and health professionals to ensure that the children's emotional and physical health needs are well understood and met. This collaborative approach contributes to children receiving timely and coordinated support.

Staff encourage children to talk through any difficulties that they may have, and they help them to resolve issues constructively, including those arising within peer groups. Regular 'house meetings' and everyday interactions are used well to build children's social skills and emotional resilience.

Children's education is prioritised. Staff make proactive efforts to ensure that all the children receive meaningful educational input, including those who are unable to attend school. For one child, staff have arranged for educational and therapeutic professionals to provide support in the home. Feedback from the education provider highlights the child's progress and reflects positively on the strong partnership working between the home and the school.

Staff support children to enjoy family time at the home and in the community. This increases each child's ability to form and sustain attachments to their birth family and helps them to develop their sense of identity.

Staff work diligently with children who are reluctant to engage, making daily, well-considered efforts to build rapport and to offer support. Staff also closely monitor patterns of interaction to identify themes that will shape an effective care plan. This persistence and associated reflective practice demonstrate the staff's resilience and their commitment to meeting the needs of all of the children.

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

Allegations made by the children are taken seriously. Staff listen carefully and ensure that concerns are investigated promptly and appropriately. Managers and staff seek advice from external safeguarding agencies when required and act on this guidance effectively. Staff have also made changes to their practice following the outcome of an investigation. This demonstrates reflective practice and a responsive approach to safeguarding.

Staff understand the risks associated with children's use of the internet and monitor this as a matter of routine. Children are encouraged to speak openly about the websites they visit and the online groups they are involved with. Monitoring of electronic devices is proportionate and supports the children to develop safe online behaviours while maintaining a balanced approach to privacy.

Consequences are used proportionately and are clearly linked to behaviour. For example, one child contributed a small amount of money towards repairing damage caused during an incident. This reflects a restorative and fair approach that helps children to understand the consequences of their actions.

Restrictive physical interventions are used only as a last resort. When interventions do occur, they are proportionate and focused on keeping the child and others safe.

Positive behaviour management plans have been updated recently in line with the local authority development plan. Staff are familiarising themselves with these new documents, which make expectations clearer and more meaningful for children. This enhances the consistency and inclusivity of behaviour support across the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed effectively by an experienced and skilled manager. The home is appropriately staffed and resourced to meet the needs of the children, ensuring that they receive consistent and well-coordinated care.

Staff are safely recruited, suitably vetted, and possess the skills required to deliver good-quality support to children. New arrangements have been introduced to strengthen oversight of key-work sessions and general record-keeping, improving the consistency of practice across the team.

Monthly structured key-work sessions provide a useful framework for ongoing support. However, some key work continues to occur on an ad hoc basis and can be deprioritised during busier periods. Managers are not ensuring that planned sessions are completed routinely and do not slip.

The manager promotes children's involvement in their care by encouraging them to review their own files, plans and risk assessments. This supports children's understanding and ownership of their progress.

The manager responds appropriately to concerns raised, including those voiced directly by children. For example, when a child expressed that staff needed a better understanding of their health needs, the manager arranged relevant training to build staff knowledge and confidence. This demonstrates a responsive and child-centred leadership approach.

Staff receive regular and effective supervision that focuses on children's experiences, needs, plans and feedback. Records of supervision sessions are clear and demonstrate reflective practice.

Relationships across the staff team are relaxed and positive, creating a supportive environment. This constructive team culture models healthy relationships for children and contributes to their emotional security.

The manager is actively working to develop more diverse and inclusive practice in the home. This ongoing work supports the children and staff to develop positive attitudes towards diversity and the wider community.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that is helpful to the child. ('Guide to Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that staff gain skills and experience that enable them to actively support each child to achieve their potential. ('Guide to Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.5)

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: 2791102

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Oxfordshire County Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

Responsible individual: Charlotte Davey

Manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Shaheda Dhandia, Social Care Inspector

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