

SC012021

Registered provider: The Loddon Foundation Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides education and care for up to 30 pupils, from eight to 19 years of age, who have an autistic spectrum disorder, severe learning disabilities and/or associated complex restrictive behaviours. The school operates as a charitable trust and is registered with the Department for Education.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since February 2018.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 October 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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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: 11 July 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/07/2018	Full	Outstanding
13/12/2017	Full	Outstanding
22/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/09/2016	Full	Good

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, 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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— - helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and - promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— - lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; - ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; - ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(d)(e))	11/01/2020

Recommendations

- As with all the Quality Standards, the responsibilities and accountabilities in this standard fall on the registered person. In practice, just as with the other standards, those responsible for the day to day running of homes, including leadership teams in large homes and specialist advisers within other settings (for example, security advisers in secure homes) play a key role in enabling the registered person to fulfil the requirements of this standard. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.2)

In particular, ensure that the registered person is able to fulfil the requirements of this standard by having effective systems in place to monitor the completion of key tasks.

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes

regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

In particular, ensure that supervision is regular and of good quality for all staff.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The core staff team's skilled and sensitive approach to the children's care and learning reduces the children's feelings of anxiety. This enables the children to connect with their surroundings and provides a fertile environment for them to acquire skills and responses that help them to prepare for the adult world.

A fully integrated and targeted approach to the children's care, learning and recreation enables them to develop knowledge, understanding and key life skills. This takes place across all settings in the home during the waking day. The process is flexible and carefully tailored to the needs, abilities, moods and interests of each child, and enables them to make substantial progress.

Staff support and encourage the children to socialise inside and outside the home, and to participate in community activities. Staff display a strong awareness around preparing the children for the challenges that they are likely to face when the time comes to move on. High levels of contact are maintained with parents and carers, who are directly involved in plans and targets for their children and in plotting their much-celebrated progress.

High levels of communication are maintained within the staff teams for each home unit, and this joined-up approach also contributes to the significant progress that the children make. Facilities and grounds are extensive and provide a rich, relaxed and stimulating environment in which the children can expand their experience of the world and develop their potential. This includes the opportunity to engage in all aspects of the arts and a wide range of exercise and recreational activities, as well as the daily opportunity to interact with farm animals.

Any necessary specialised services are made available to the children as soon as needs arise or are anticipated. There is close team working between those providing specialist services, care and learning. Procedures and practice around the routine health needs of the children are meticulous and standards are high.

The staff's preparations and planning for children moving into the home, as well as moving on from the home, are thorough and careful. This helps the children to make the necessary changes in a way that minimises the disruption to their sense of safety and security. The children remain at the absolute centre of all the thinking, planning and action that takes place within the school, and staff display high levels of respect, patience and affection for those in their charge.

Parents speak highly of the quality of care that their children receive. One parent commented, 'The home has been amazing with my boy. I would give them 100%. It's an outstanding place – from every angle.'

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

The procedures and practices of staff in supporting the children to deal with strong feelings and behaviours that limit their learning and development are of the highest standard and meticulously recorded. This helps the staff to learn lessons and improve their standards of practice. Consequently, the staff team maintains an environment and conditions in which the children feel safe, secure and free to learn, and in which they can develop and enjoy their surroundings.

A detailed knowledge and understanding of each child's potential and abilities enables the staff to support the children in taking appropriate risks and in exploring new experiences. This increases the children's ability to recognise and deal with hazards themselves and helps them to become safer.

The staff team succeeds in providing a safe and well-maintained physical environment without undermining a homely and relaxed atmosphere.

Any incident in which the safety and well-being of a child was, or may have been, compromised is taken very seriously and is comprehensively and thoroughly investigated to identify and remove any further risks. Inquisitive leaders, managers and staff explore and dissect all incidents and concerns of a safeguarding nature. Incident and investigation records are scrutinised and diligently explored, in liaison with external safeguarding agencies, where appropriate. This practice puts the children's welfare and safety at the core of everyone's thinking.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leadership of the service is strong, and the integrated approach to the children's care and learning is mirrored in the mix of education and care professionals in the cohesive senior leadership team. Plans for developing the service and improving the outcomes for children are ambitious. Finance arrangements for the ongoing further development of the site and facilities are in place.

A highly committed and dedicated core staff team successfully mitigates the threats to the continuity and stability of the children's care that results from significant agency staff use. All reasonable efforts are made to ensure that agency staff are suitable and are booked for continuous periods. Staff retention figures are of concern, and there is limited action being taken by leaders to fully explore and understand the reasons for this.

The induction of new staff is systematic and thorough. Mandatory training is carefully prioritised and monitored. Staff speak highly of their opportunities for ongoing professional development. The time frames for care staff to meet the qualification requirements are meticulously monitored and proactive steps are taken to ensure that all

staff achieve the necessary success. However, the regularity and content of supervision for all staff involved in the children's care is variable. This risks an inconsistent approach and experience across the staff team.

A further area of inconsistency relates to record-keeping. Safeguarding records are very detailed, whereas gaps are apparent for some children's essential information details. In another area, records in respect of maintenance works are sometimes unclear. In both cases the information is known, albeit not captured in an easily retrievable way. Such shortfalls do not currently affect the children's welfare or safety, but they do hinder swift monitoring.

Plans for the care and progress of the children are clear and carefully monitored in conjunction with parents, carers and placing authorities. Leaders and managers seek and listen closely to the feedback these parties provide. They use this information to improve the quality of care.

A placing social worker with extensive experience of the provision commented, 'I can only compliment the service for its skilful delivery in every area. I think it is an amazing provision.'

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC012021

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: The Loddon Foundation Ltd

Responsible individual: Marion Cornick

Registered manager: Timothy Clark

Inspectors

John Pledger, social care inspector

Keith Riley, social care inspector

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